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New Zealand
Classic Car

TRACK WARRIOR TO ROAD CRUISER

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+ LENNY GILBERT
"AN EARLY KINDNESS REWARDED!"

+ LARRY'S JAGUAR
"MY UNUSUAL, UNEXPLAINED JAGUAR"

+ PETER JACKSON
JOHN WICK- BOSS MUSCLE

+ COSMIC GIRL'S DIABLO CLOSE ENCOUNTER

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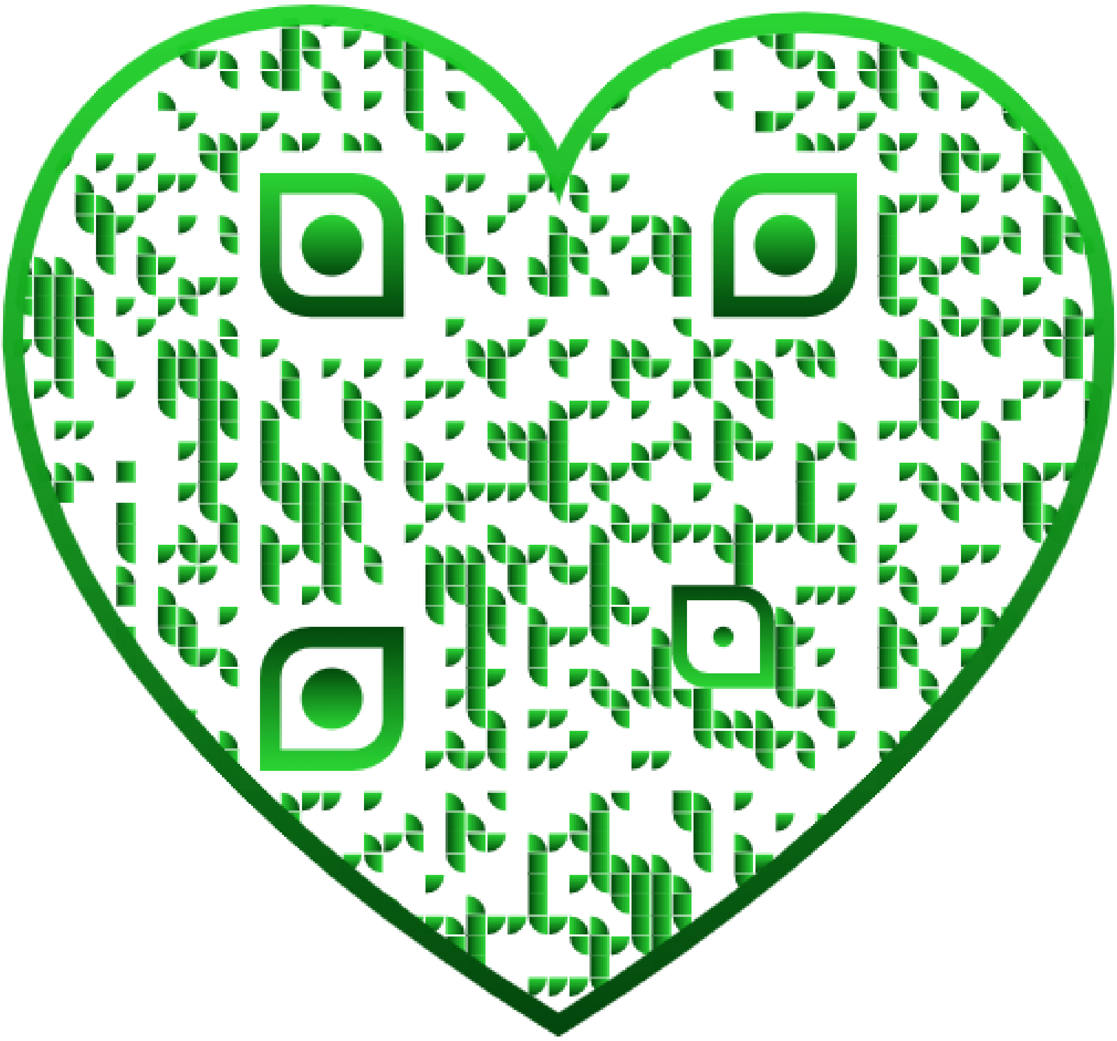

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Toby Dimmock's 1974 Ford Capri Mark 1, GXL 3-Litre,
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Editorial 402

Hectic is the best way to describe the past few weeks, with the buildup for the Ayrburn Classic 2026 in February. Don't miss this world-class event right on your doorstep, and look out for the massive Christmas issue of New Zealand Classic Car. It's a beauty!

Two factors to note are, firstly, industry and trade's support has been phenomenal. All available commercial sites have been snapped up! That's a superb effort, no doubt due largely to the efforts of Rusty Media's Sales Manager Matt Smith, who has put in a solid effort to achieve the level of support.

Secondly, entries have already maxed out in a couple of categories, while entries from the North Island have been particularly steady, so get your entries in now!

NEW ZEALAND CLASSIC CAR

You will notice this issue: three young ladies have joined the contributor ranks for NZCC. Miranda, Melissa and Chelsea have got off to a flying start with some top features. It's great to welcome them aboard, and we look forward to your ideas in the magazine.

TOM MATANO

Designer of the Mazda MX-5, Tom Matano passed away on 20 September 2025, aged 76. Tom had a wide design experience at Volvo, BMW and GM before joining Mazda's US design office in 1983. He was responsible for the first-generation MX-5 and the rotary-powered FD series RX-7. Tom also oversaw the 1996 Mazda Miata M Coupe project and the RX-8 development, retiring in 2002.

A notable improviser, he once said, "We were frustrated that the cars we wanted were either too expensive or too old. We wanted the spirit of the '60s to be an integral part of the Light Weight Sports project, and though it wasn't based on one particular car, we bought a Lotus Elan, Triumph Spitfire and such, to demonstrate that spirit to headquarters," he said, "I even made one designer in our studio commute to the office with the top down for a year."

Tom's daily drivers were a silver FD Mazda RX-7 and an MX-5 M Edition in Starlight Mica, to match his hair, he explained.

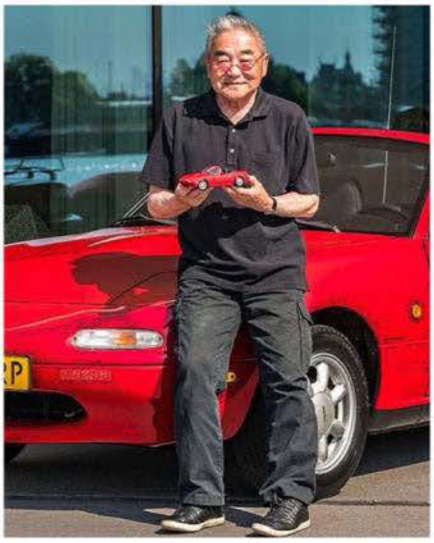

Photo: Gary Stirling

JAGUAR BOOK LAUNCH

The Rev. Dr Richard Waugh has done it again and shortly after this issue of New Zealand Classic Car hits the shelves it will hopefully be here for the November rally in Christchurch. Cam Leggett (100 Years of Jaguar in New Zealand) is behind the shutter again for this book and it looks great. Information is in this issue on how to get yours in either hard or softback versions.

THUNDER RIDGE

West Bay of Plenty Council has voted unanimously for the new motor racing circuit to go ahead as part of a dedicated motorsport facility at TECT Park near Tauranga. Tony Roberts, Gary Stirling, and Roger Williams formed the trust behind the project. This world-class venue caters for grass-roots motor racing as well as the 'big stuff'. We wish them well in their project.

Enjoy reading what I hope is something for everyone and drive safely with hopefully better weather to come.

Quinton Taylor
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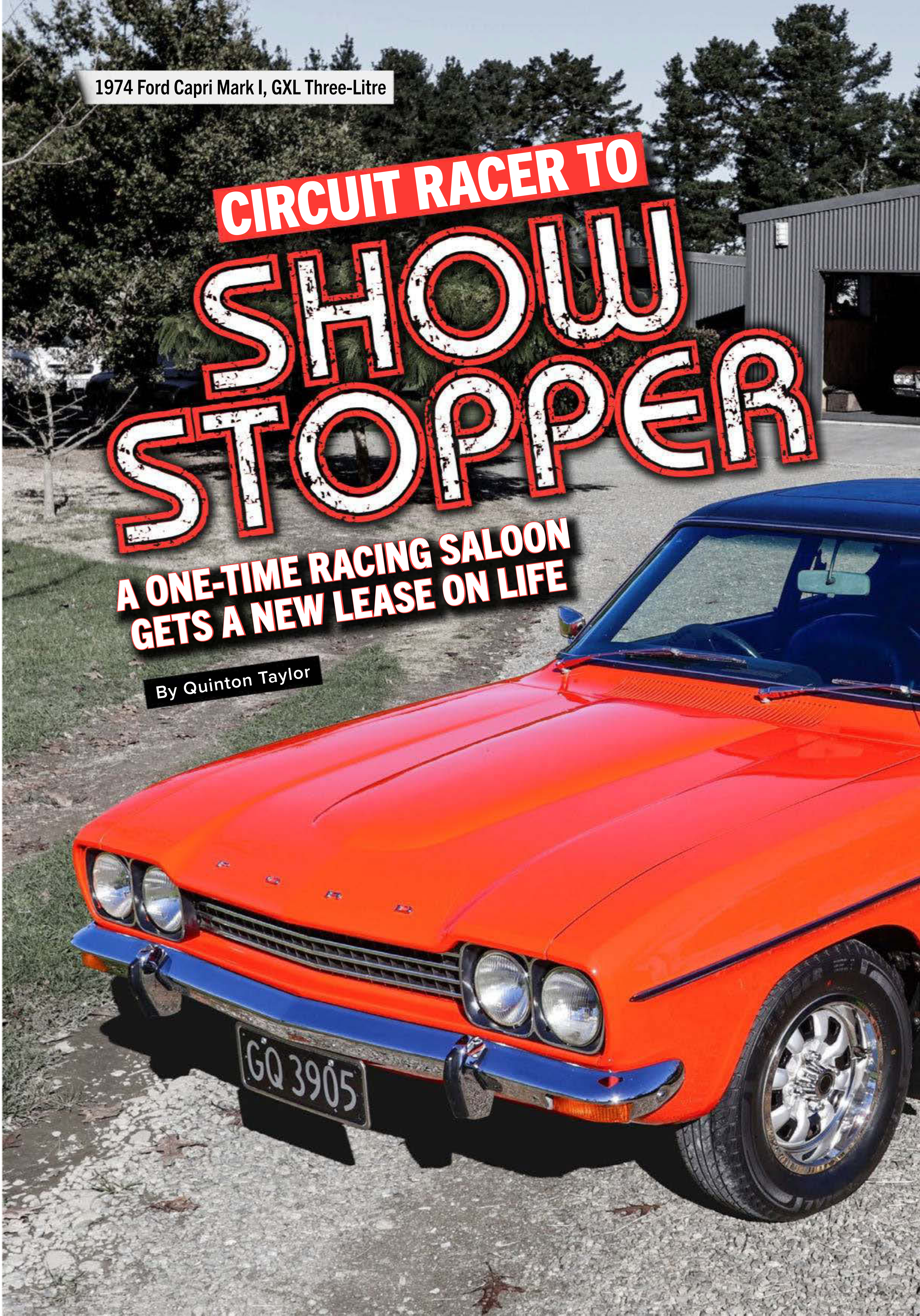
1974 Ford Capri Mark I, GXL Three-Litre

CIRCUIT RACER TO SHOW STOPPER

A ONE-TIME RACING SALOON GETS A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

By Quinton Taylor



Hugely popular back in the day, and European champion, Ford's Capri is still a popular and competitive racing saloon, so to find one turned back into a pristine road car is rare indeed!

Loburn's rolling hills and river plains in North Canterbury are renowned for their fruit-growing areas, and also have some great driving roads, perfect for enjoying the long-legged cruising Ford Capri featured here.

Since the Christchurch earthquakes, the area has become a sought-after lifestyle locale. Toby Dimmock and partner Donna moved to the area a short time ago, and they enjoy the laid-back, sunny lifestyle of the region in their new home, which features a generously sized garage and sheds, perfect for a couple of gleaming classics. The couple are best known for their 1972 Holden HQ Monaro LS, a show-winning car that serves as their big, comfortable, country cruiser when driving to car shows – we'll bring you a feature soon on this amazing car.

Their Capri is something special too, with an unexpected background quite at odds with its amazing current condition.

CHANGING TIMES

As the '70s progressed, the fuel crisis and the development of competitors' coupes slowed sales, so Ford responded to its market analysis of the Capri with a winning strategy. The Mark I was criticised for lack of luggage room, so in 1974, Ford introduced the Mark II Capri with a hatchback. The design created a whole new look and market for the popular car.

The V4 was replaced by an overhead-camshaft two-litre Pinto engine. The base models, from the 1300cc (pushrod) and 1600cc (Pinto) to the two-litre versions, sold well, but the big news was the Cologne 3000 and 2000 Ghia versions that replaced the GXL models.

In 1978, competition and a drop in sales ushered in the Mark III Capri. The Cologne 2.8-litre V6 engine was the top option, replacing the Essex design. The Mark III would be the best-balanced Capri according to some opinions. The big Fords were also favoured by television, with classics such as the example

CAPPELLI
170
YOKOHAMA

CAPPELLI
HOLDEN
155
GQ 3905

Queenstown Street race

driven enthusiastically on *Minder* and two examples on *The Professionals*.

A TRANSFORMATION

In sharp contrast to its diverse South Island motor racing career – from Ruapuna Raceway to the tight, twisty Queenstown Street Race circuit – Toby and Donna's Capri, now gleaming in its bright red paintwork and black vinyl roof, shares a large garage with the Holden Monaro.

Toby has a comprehensive record of the Capri's history, including memorabilia, thanks to its previous careful owners.

As he explains, "It was built in December '73, the last month of manufacture for the Mark I, and is a facelift model. It arrived here in New Zealand in June 1974. It has a factory sunroof; a vinyl seat with a cloth seat insert option; and other than that, it is a standard GXL."

The Capri still runs its original Essx V6 engine but with substantially increased ports in the cylinder head, as it was well cared for by two previous long-term owners. He has been in touch with all previous owners and found one dealer/owner helpful.

"One of these two used the car as his daily driver. Barry Cottle had the car for a couple of months from new." The car joined Barry's interesting collection for a while.

THE RACER'S EDGE

"I believe it was then sold to its second long-term owner, Chris Betty. He intended to use it basically in a gentleman's race series, which he did for 10 years. The car still ended up as a road car, but one he could have a bit of fun with," says Toby.

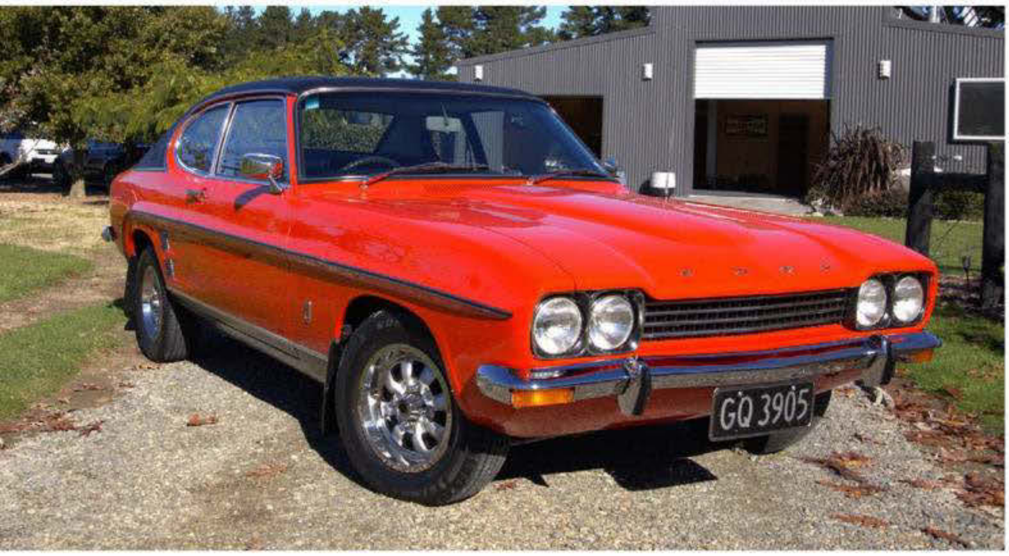
As the years went by, Betty progressively upgraded the car, with a large amount of work concentrating on suspension and engine modifications, mainly to the top-end of the motor.

"Funny how that happens, doesn't it? Yeah. The need for speed. There's always that drive to go faster," he says.

Betty first campaigned the Capri in 1992, and its last event was in 1999.

"The car competed in a lot of events in that time," Toby says. "I love that part of the car's history, because of the numerous times that I've taken the car to shows and someone has come up to me and asked if it was Chris Betty's old race car."

Racing at Ruapuna



The car survived quite well, given the amount of panel bashing occurring in many racing series of the early '90s.

"From what Chris told me, it was quite a respectful class he raced in. The Capri suffered very little panel damage in the time that it was raced. There were some nice Jaguars, and things like that," says Toby.

When it came time to sell, the car changed hands to another racing enthusiast: "Chris sold it to a guy who owned a Spar Pool company. He intended to go racing, but he never did. I bought it from him around 2006, along with all the factory parts to put back on the car at some stage. I left it in its racing form for a while, waiting until such time as the value of the car went up, and once it was, I could warrant putting money into it and putting it back into its road-going trim, including redoing the motor. The motor itself was a little bit too adventurous for the road, let's say!"

The Capri provided neighbours with interesting sights, as the exhaust, exiting under the doors on each side, crackled and popped, and spat flames on the overrun.

"I sort of wish I still had those. Stocking shredders for the British!" Toby says.

CHARACTER CHANGES

Around 2013, the Capri received some detailed attention. Toby explains, "I gave it what you would call a 'reconditioning' – not a full restoration, but a mild tidy up, I guess, which did include a repaint, in Sebring Red. It looks bloody good at the moment! Adrienne Barnes painted the car and did a magnificent job which has lasted well. She was a very good local car painter, and she passed away a few years ago."

As you can see from the photos, this Capri is a real stunner, very much at odds with its 10 years of track action.

Toby credits the reason for the car looking so good to the number of people who helped with its reconditioning.

A new vinyl covering for the roof was sourced from the UK, and the driver's seat upholstery required some minor attention.

"Dashboard Restorations in Auckland did the dashboard," he says, "and I don't think you could get a better job anywhere."

He sourced a set of original Ford Capri sports wheels, which he tidied himself, and managed to find a set of

chrome wheel trims out of the UK.

"Before our national event [Ford Capri Nationals] last October," Toby says, "I ended up fitting NOS side vents on the mudguards and a few other bits and pieces. I'm always adding little bits – I never grow tired of it."

A RELIABLE GRAND TOURER

The V6 engine came in for upgrades in the course of an overhaul, with the Essex's Achilles heel of fibre timing gears replaced by more reliable steel and alloy units. The ignition points were removed and replaced with an electronic breaker-less ignition.

"Dad was an aircraft engineer at Air New Zealand, and he helped," says Toby. "I pulled the motor out and rebuilt it, and I got it balanced for me at Air New Zealand. That made an amazing difference to the way it's going. Peter Bell Engine Reconditioners did the motors on both the Capri and the Monaro, and both motors are great runners."

The Capri is now used mainly for club events and car shows.

"We've had tons of trips away," says Toby. "We did the club's 50th anniversary run with the New Zealand Capri Club, and that was Kaitaia to Bluff. I entered the Nelson to Bluff section, which took just over a week, and last October, we did what we call 'The Six Passes Tour'. That was great."

"MY BABY"

Toby describes the Capri as "my baby". "I still chase parts for it," he says.

"They've got a nice sound too, and I remember them being thrown around in *The Professionals* television series. It's fantastic to drive. It's very sporty, I suppose you could say. It's definitely nose-heavy for sure, but you know, I've got chalk and

cheese out there," Toby says, referring to his choices of either the Holden Monaro or the Capri. "I've got a big 'armchair' that I can drive, or alternatively, a reasonably nimble, point-to-point, and quite quick car in the Capri."

FORD'S SUCCESSFUL EUROPEAN GT – A RUNAWAY SUCCESS

Ford recognised that there was a market opportunity for an affordable, stylish sports coupe that could seat four people, providing a viable alternative to traditional two-seat sports cars. This concept was gradually developed over 15 years. Earlier versions of the Capri were based on the Cortina, but this new European model, with its distinctive coupe design, established a standard for both road and racetrack performance.

Its success was in part due to Ford basing it on proven mechanical bits sourced from its vast parts bin and a modified Cortina Mark II platform, along with a tempting array of trim and mechanical options.

Engines ranged from a 1298cc four-cylinder engine with a modest 52bhp (39kW) up to the 93bhp (69kW) 1996cc Essex V4, which, with a different head, also powered the Transit van – hardly shattering performance options, but the best was yet to come.

RACING INTENTIONS

Ford's sporting intentions were quite clear when it also displayed another version of the Capri at its launch, powered by a detuned Formula 2 Cosworth BDA 1600cc engine. Sadly, it wasn't offered in the production Capri.

Several tuning firms thought the Capri's GT styling deserved more power and shoehorned the Zephyr Mark IV's three-litre Essex V6 into some of them. In late 1969, Ford brought out its own V6 version, the 3000GT.

The Capri's reputation as a potent open-road cruiser with a penchant for power slides was sealed. Not long after, Ford went into motor racing, and both Ford Britain and Ford Germany developed their own versions.

Racetrack success came almost immediately. Dieter Glemser won the European Touring Car Championship in 1971 with a Weslake Capri RS2600, an engine good for 260bhp (194kW). It was the start of some epic battles between Ford Capri RS2600s and Schnitzer BMWs. In 1972, Jochen Mass took the European Touring Car title in an RS2600 Capri. In 1973, BMW returned with its 'Batmobile' winged car. Ford replied with a bigger engine and wings for the RS3100, the potent Cosworth V6 lifting power to 450bhp (335kW).

The German Ford racing department was disbanded in 1974, and Capri development was left to privateers. In 1978, Ford joined forces with tuning firm Zakspeed, creating a turbocharged, 1400cc-powered car producing 530ps (390kW), to challenge the dominance of Porsche in Group 5.

Surprisingly, there has been quite a scrap over who actually designed the Capri. The contenders are Americans Gil Spear and Phil Clark, and arguments from both camps over 'Project Colt', as Ford called it, have made it into publications from both groups.

RACING KIWI CAPRIS

One of New Zealand's most famous racing Capris was driven by local champion Paul Fahey from 1973 to 1975. In the book *Paul Fahey: A Celebration of a Kiwi Motorsport Legend* (Imagination Press, 2017), Fahey reflects on the exceptional performance of the car.

Before transitioning to the RS3100 in 1974, Ford Germany participated in its last touring car race with two RS2600 Group 2 cars at Macau in 1973.

Fahey purchased the newer No. 2 car, which was equipped with a Weslake engine at just under 3000cc. The car arrived in New Zealand just in time for its debut at Bay Park Raceway, where it won in its first outing.

Fahey was understandably thrilled with his new acquisition, despite it arriving in long-distance race trim with no spare parts or replacement Dunlop race tyres.

"These tyres took several laps to warm up, but once they did, it was a wonderful car to drive," Fahey noted.

The pair created epic spectacles in 1975 against V8-powered opposition from Jim Richards, Red Dawson, Rod Coppins,

> "FORD REPLIED WITH A BIGGER ENGINE AND WINGS FOR THE RS3100, THE POTENT COSWORTH V6 LIFTING POWER TO 450BHP (335KW)"

and Leo Leonard in the PDL Mustang and the Halliday Capri V6.

In 1975, Fahey negotiated a deal with Ford to use one of the new Cosworth 3.4-litre V6 engines, with 420bhp (313kW). Back to Bay Park, and Fahey watched Australian Pete Geoghegan break the lap record in his 3.4-litre Porsche Carrera. Fahey went out, and just five minutes later, the lap record was his.

The Paul Fahey Flying Farewell event at Pukekohe on 2 April 1975 ended 24 years of racing for Fahey – fittingly, he was driving the Capri with the New Zealand Saloon Car Championship already his – and the Capri was sold.

STILL TO THE FORE IN CLASSIC RACING

Capris are still competing in classic racing to this day. A good handful turned up last month for the season opener run by the Classic Motor Racing Club at its Brooklands Members Meeting, on Saturday, 13 September at Timaru International Motor Raceway in the Pre-78s' largest turnout yet of a field of some 37 cars.

The class, along with the OSCA (Open Saloon Car Association) series, has been a saviour for an increasing number of well-preserved and interesting cars. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

1974 Ford Capri Mark I GXL

Engine	Three-litre (2994cc) 60-degree, V6 'Essex', two valves per cylinder
Bore/Stroke	93.66x72.44mm
Power	157bhp (117kW) at 5000rpm
Torque	192 lb ft (260Nm) at 3000rpm
Fuel system	Weber 38 DTAS twin-choke carburettor
Comp. ratio	9.0:1
Gearbox	Four-speed manual/auto option
Suspension F/R	Independent McPherson struts and anti-roll bar, solid rear axle half-elliptic leaf springs, twin radius arms and telescopic shock absorbers
Brakes F/R	Disc brakes 244mm and 228mm drums, rear, power-assisted
Tyres	185/70x13 on steel disc wheels, optional Rostyle steel wheels
Weight	1079kg
Length	4262mm
Width	1646mm
Track F/R	1346mm, 1321mm
Fuel capacity	58 litres
Performance	0–100kph, 8.2s; top speed, 203kph
Production	Total Capri, all marks: Halewood, Great Britain, 398,440; Cologne and Saarlouis, Germany, 1,524,407; assembled in Australia 1971–'72 (Mark I only); assembled in South Africa by Basil Green Motors, 500 – 302 having Ford V8 engines and being sold as Capri Peranas. From 1976 to 1986, all Capri production took place in Germany

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IN TUNE WITH Miranda

COSMIC GIRL

A close encounter with three Diablos!

By Miranda Easten, photography by Jono Townsend and Sam Parsons

There are certain moments in life when it dawns on you – often quite suddenly – that you are, in fact, living the dream!

No, not the 'won a free meat pack at the pub raffle' kind of dream, but the proper, pinch-yourself, this-can't-be-real variety.

The first time it happened to me was as a teenager when the audience clapped at the end of my first concert rather than booing me off the stage (I assume it wasn't just a sympathy clap).

Or, when I released a very personal album and it actually charted. Then there was that hot summer when I drove my first classic car solo from Christchurch all the way to Queenstown, windows down, stereo blaring, and for once, everything in life seemed to align.

Another 'right now, I'm living the dream' moment came when Andrew Densem, of Southern Specialist Cars (SSC), got in touch with a little idea he had for a meet-up.

GALLERY GLITTERATI!

Let me start by saying the offerings at the SSC showroom are ridiculous – in the best way possible. We're talking Lamborghini, Ferrari, Porsche, and several cars you'd happily sell your soul to drive, as well as all the limited editions and special variants that make collectors weak at the knees.

Every corner is a feast for the eyes, like walking through a gallery where each canvas happens to have a V12 heartbeat. I've written about their cars before, and yes, I've been spoiled rotten – last birthday I even spent a day with a McLaren, just because I could.

The choices, the candy, the sheer temptation … It's borderline criminal!

But nothing, and I mean nothing, could have prepared me for what was in store this time!

DIABLO FROM SANT'AGATA BOLOGNESE!

In disbelief, I found myself in the company of not one, not two, but three exceedingly rare Lamborghinis, all of them stunning examples of the iconic

Diablo. It was a bucket-list moment, the kind of scene that makes your inner ten-year-old squeal louder than your actual adult voice ever could.

Hanging out with that trio of raging bulls felt a bit like being backstage at a rock concert with the band you plastered all over your teenage bedroom walls (Duran Duran for me) – except these idols were shinier, faster, and smelled faintly of petrol instead of cigarettes.

Over the last few years, you've probably noticed the way classic cars have been shooting up in value. It's like the stock market, only a lot less boring (from my perspective anyway).

While most classics have grown in value, certain models have reached almost celebrity status in the eyes of collectors.

DEVILISH VALUES

The Lamborghini Diablo is one of those cars. These machines are suddenly commanding sums at auction that make even seasoned collectors raise an eyebrow [Up 136 per cent at some auctions in 2024 (WhichCar) – Ed.]. They're not just rising in value – they're also outpacing most of their peers, leaving many so-called icons in the dust.

POSTER ON MY WALL

Of course, a Diablo has always had that 'poster on the bedroom wall' magic. For me, it was Jamiroquai's 'Cosmic Girl' video that sealed the deal – seeing those wild shapes glide across the desert and those twisty roads made me fall head over heels. Pop culture has kept these cars burning hot in our imaginations long before then and ever since.

But right now? Diablos are white-hot! Donald Trump's 1997 Diablo VT Roadster – painted in a one-off shade of 'Blu Le Mans', sold earlier this year for an eye-watering US$1.1M at Barrett-Jackson auctions. The Diablo isn't just another '90s supercar – it's become an appreciating star, with or without famous ownership.

COUNTACH'S WORTHY SUCCESSOR

The Lamborghini Diablo roared onto the scene in 1990 as the fiery successor to the legendary Countach, born from Project 132 – a design initiative that began in 1985 during Lamborghini's transitional era under Chrysler. Its dramatic styling, initially envisioned

by Marcello Gandini and later softened by Chrysler's design team, gave it that unmistakable – and still jaw-dropping – supercar silhouette.

At launch, the Diablo became the fastest production car in the world, reaching 325kph (about 203mph) with its throaty 5.7-litre V12 pushing out roughly 485 horsepower (362kW).

In 1993, Lamborghini introduced the Diablo VT – its first all-wheel drive model – which enhanced handling by channelling torque to the front wheels as needed. Over its 11-year production run, Lamborghini continually refined the Diablo through special editions – the SE30, SV, VT Roadster, and later facelift models featuring ABS and updated aesthetics – culminating in a total of 2903 units before the Diablo bowed out in 2001, succeeded by the Murciélago.

COLLECTOR FOCUS

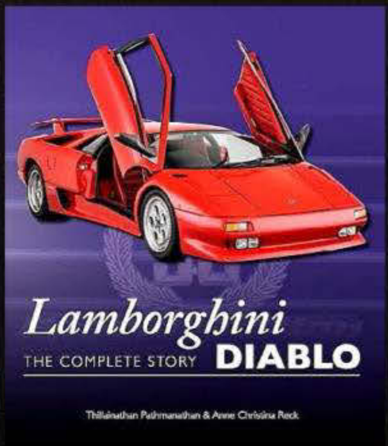
For collectors, the rarest Diablos are often the SE30 Jota track specials, the GT (of which only 80 were made), and limited-edition roadsters. And for design purists, Gandini's original, sharper proposal for the Diablo – which Chrysler deemed 'too extreme' – didn't go to waste: it was later reborn almost unchanged as the Cizeta-Moroder V16T, one of the quirkiest and most ambitious supercars of the era.

A SURREAL DAY

Back to the present time. The day itself felt like something out of a film set. Andrew had curated the perfect backdrop – a disused warehouse in Christchurch, all industrial grit and faded character.

I arrived early, with my bag of carefully chosen outfits – pretty dresses and heels that I'd convinced myself would make me look suitably glamorous alongside Italian supercars. But the truth was, no matter how much silk or sequins I pulled on, I was always going to look underdressed next to a Diablo. These cars wear drama like haute couture; I was merely the supporting act.

I waited in the echoing space, nerves fizzing, until the silence broke – a distant growl rising in the background. The sound grew louder, bouncing off the warehouse walls like rolling thunder. And then they came: shimmering under the lights, roaring as each one pulled in, the Diablos moved with such presence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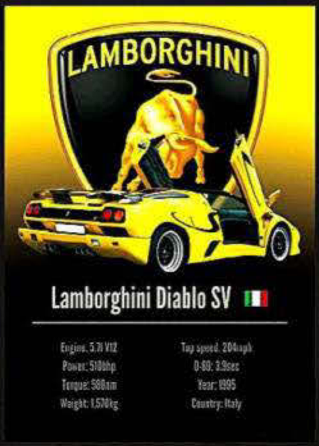
LAMBORGHINI
Lamborghini Diablo SV
Engine: 5.7l V12
Power: 510bhp
Torque: 580nm
Weight: 1,570kg
Top speed: 204mph
0-60: 3.9sec
Year: 1995
Country: Italy

"A DIABLO HAS ALWAYS HAD THAT 'POSTER ON THE BEDROOM WALL' MAGIC"

it was almost like a choreographed performance.

One by one, they filed into place, their engines settling into a feral harmony, three raging bulls lined up as if for inspection. And all I could think was that even in my best dress, I should have worn something louder.

DEVIL'S IN THE COLOUR

Then there were the colours – absolutely outrageous in the best possible way. Parked together under the warehouse lights, they looked less like cars and more like a tray of summer treats lined up for inspection.

The deep purple shimmered like a grape popsicle just pulled from the freezer, the yellow glowed like a banana Fruit Burst lolly begging to be unwrapped. The silver gleamed cool and crisp, as refreshing as mint. They looked so delicious you half expected a kid with sticky hands to come running up and try to lick one – ew, sorry, that's gross. Of course, these weren't the sort of sweets you could actually eat – but they were pure automotive eye candy, designed to tempt and tease with every curve and shimmer.

POWERHOUSE TRIO

The air crackled with supercar royalty. First up, a 2001 Diablo 6.0 VT Coupe flaunted a 6.0-litre V12 producing 550 horsepower through a five-speed manual and Lamborghini's viscous-traction all-wheel drive system – an engineering powerhouse wrapped in Giallo Orion over black and originally sold new in New Zealand. Beside it stood a rare 1997 Diablo VT Roadster, originally sold new in the UK, finished in Titanium Silver over Oxblood. Under its mid-mounted hood lay a 5.7-litre V12 producing just under 500 horsepower, capable of rocketing from 0 to 100kph in around four seconds, before topping out at 320kph.

Completing the trio was a 1995 Diablo SE30 Coupe, originally sold new in Hong Kong, resplendent in Viola Metallic. And for a pop-culture thrill, this is *the* Jamiroquai music video car! It gave me goosebumps. This stripped-down, limited-edition model carried a rear-drive 5.7-litre V12 with 525 horsepower, wore bespoke bodywork and could comfortably achieve a top speed of over 325kph. All three are collector-grade, stock-trim Diablos – the living, roaring embodiment of supercar pedigree.

SAVOURING THE MOMENT

I'm used to posing with cars, swapping outfits, finding the right angles – after years in front of cameras, that part

usually comes naturally. But three Diablos?

Suddenly, all that experience felt useless. I walked around them, circling like a nervous spectator at a high stakes show, trying to figure out how to make my presence matter without stealing the spotlight from these roaring masterpieces.

No dress, no heel, no pose seemed adequate; I felt like a mere mortal in the presence of three automotive gods, and all I could think was that I would never, ever do them justice.

And then, somehow, it just clicked. The fear melted away, and instead I felt this strange, exhilarating warmth – like the cars were welcoming me, almost wrapping around me in their energy. It was as if they were hugging me, nudging me gently, whispering 'you've got this'. Standing there among those blazing colours and gleaming curves, I felt a surge of confidence that I didn't expect, a sense that for this one magical day, I belonged in their world.

SUPERCAR CAPTIVATION

Once the shoot was wrapped, I had the absolute joy of slipping into the yellow 'fruit burst' for the drive back to base. And yes, I know it's a cliché to say the engine growled beneath me – but honestly, it did.

From the moment the key was turned, that V12 was alive, purring, growling, SPECIFICATIONS

1990-2001 LAMBORGHINI DIABLO

(Figures for 6 litre version)

Engine	V12 Lamborghini water-cooled, all-alloy of either 5.7 litre and latter 6 litre, 48-valve, longitudinally, mid-mounted, rear drive/all-wheel drive (VT models)
Bore x stroke	87mm x 84mm, 5992cc
Power	575ps (567bhp) at 7100rpm
Torque	630Nm at 5500rpm
Transmission	Five-speed manual transaxle driving rear wheels. Front transfer drive, 2 x self-locking differentials from 1993 on with VT model
Fuel system	Fuel injection, individual port injection
Chassis	Spaceframe, aluminium body. Independent suspension coil-over shock absorbers and wishbones/control arms all round
Weight	1625kg (all-wheel drive VT models)
Height	1105mm
Length	4460mm
Wheelbase	2650mm
Brakes, F/R	330mm vented, discs, 278mm rear, all cross-drilled
Tyres, F/R	Pirelli P Zero 235/40ZR-17, 335/35ZR-17
Performance	0–60kph 2.7 seconds; 0–100kph 4.5 seconds; 0–250kph 23.0 seconds
Top speed	203–210mph (340kph), depending on the model
Standing quarter	12.3 seconds
Designer	Marcello Gandini drew the original design, and later, with Tom Gale of the Chrysler Styling Centre (Chrysler bought Lamborghini in 1987), finalised (read rounding out Gandini's sharp edges 1998) the design, and then Luc Donckerwolke (Audi ownership) for the Diablo VT (built from 1993). Lamborghini now owned by Audi Automobili SpA part of Audi AG-Volkswagen Group
Numbers built	2884 units, production 1990–2001
Models	1990–1998; 6 variants (roadster from 1996)
	Uplift/facelift; 7 variants 1998–2001; Race specials 5 from 1995–2000)
Superseded by	Murciélago
Original price	US$239K

moaning its way down the road like it had something very important (and very sexy) to say. The heat of it, the vibration, the way the sound wrapped itself around me – it was intoxicating. Inside, I was just as captivated: the chunky switches and dials had a purposeful, almost aircraft-like feel, and the gauges and little compartments gave it this blend of fighter jet and Italian opera house. It was dramatic and utterly addictive.

ATTENTION GETTERS

Reactions from people on the street were as you would expect. Heads turned fast enough for whiplash, jaws dropped, and cameras appeared. Kids pressed faces against car windows, grown-ups had cheeky grins and gave thumbs-ups. People slowed down to follow, and pedestrians paused mid-step. Even cyclists couldn't resist a second glance.

For a few glorious minutes, it felt like the car had its own parade, and I was just lucky enough to be along for the ride, soaking in the wide-eyed awe it inspired at every corner.

While the street show was over in minutes, it was a sweet reminder that moments with a collector-grade Diablo are rare, fleeting, and impossible to forget – just like the cars themselves.

HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW!

Normally, I'd wrap up a story like this by telling you where to go if you want to secure one of these babies, or at least drop a few hints about where they might pop up next. But the truth is, the market for Diablos is so hot right now that by the time my words make it to print, the cars are often long gone – snapped up by passionate buyers before the ink is even dry.

In this case, they didn't even wait for the end of the photo shoot or for me to start writing. That's right – before I'd even kicked off my heels and packed away my dresses, negotiations were already underway for them to be sold as a complete set to a single collector.

Just like that, the warehouse was a little emptier, the echoes a little quieter, and I was left with the sweet memory of one perfect day spent in their fleeting company – proof, if ever you needed it, that Lamborghinis wait for no one. ∎

> **"THEN THERE WERE THE COLOURS-ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGEOUS IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY!"**

CONTACT THE DEAL MAKERS.

Bringing exceptional cars and discerning drivers together.

$279,990

1982 PORSCHE 911 TURBO COUPE

153,102mi / Manual / 3299cc

Cherished in New Zealand since 1986 with just three private owners, this freshly serviced, 153,000-mile example is a rare chance to own and enjoy a beautifully presented air-cooled 911.

2004 RENAULT CLIO V6 PHASE 2
52,419mi / Manual / 2946cc
$114,990

2006 PORSCHE BOXSTER COUPE
67,092km / Manual / 2687cc
$32,990

1992 BMW M5 SEDAN (E34)
119,624km / Manual / 3795cc
$99,990

2011 MERCEDES-BENZ C 63 AMG
48,568km / Automatic / 6200cc
$56,990

2014 JAGUAR F-TYPE R V8
62,210km / Automatic / 4999cc
$77,990

1987 FERRARI 328 GTB
46,980mi / Manual / 3185cc
$199,990

2001 PORSCHE 911 TURBO (996)
83,566km / Manual / 3600cc
$114,990

1995 BMW 840ci (E31)
179,076km / Automatic / 3982cc
$49,990

HEADING

Southern Specialist Cars is your destination for premium pre-owned classic, luxury, and performance vehicles — icons and modern legends for discerning drivers across New Zealand.

When it's time to buy or sell, we make the process seamless. Trusted, proven, and experienced — we get the deal done.

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BuyerScore
#1 RATED
SMALL DEALERSHIP
Canterbury
2025

BuyerScore
TOP 20
ALL DEALERSHIPS
All New Zealand
2025

1962 Jaguar Mark II, 3.4 Litre

THE UNEXPLAINED

By Jason Burgess, photography by Jason Burgess

Part 1

Auckland music producer Larry Killip immersed himself in the swinging ’60s of Beatlemania, part of an era of pop icons, from fashion design to music. The decade closed with the first man landing on the moon, influencing a flurry of futuristic automotive design in the US. The British typically went for a more fluid and traditional bodyline, setting new standards of design, performance, and reliability, with Jaguar becoming one of the best-known style icons

Grace, Space and Pace
JB34
MK2 Jaguar 3.4 1962

When the Fab Four touched down on our shores, they triggered a youthquake that woke the city from its slumber. Like so many young musos at that time, Larry and his bandmates rode the ensuing creative wave, surging in from suburban garages to the burgeoning live scene in the city centre. One big gig stood out for Larry, and not just for the music.

"It was The Human Instinct. A great band," he says, "Their drummer and vocalist Maurice Greer looked the part, a real showman. When he drove up in a '68 white E-Type, I thought, Oh my God! It was from then that I developed a secret desire for a Jag."

The circumstances in which Larry would later find himself settling on his 1962 Mark II were not exactly rock and roll.

"GRACE, PACE AND SPACE"

Many years and a couple of life changes later, Larry was working as a sound engineer. By 1984, he and his then-wife, Elizabeth, had young kids in tow, and his old Corolla was no longer cutting the mustard. He needed to trade up to a larger family car, but his budget then came down to a choice between a Toyota Celeste and an old 3.4-litre, MkII Jaguar, as he remembers.

"I took my family along to see these cars, and to my amazement, they went for the Jag. I am grateful to Elizabeth for that, and we're still on very good terms. Unfortunately, the first time she drove it, she had only just got up the road when a spark plug flew out!"

BIRTH OF COOL

The MkII was launched in 1959, but its "Grace, Pace and Space" [Jaguar sales slogan from the years of the MkVII through to the XJ6 – Ed.], epitomised an elegance defining English motoring design well into the decade ahead. With a sleek, feline profile and rear haunches poised to spring, rounded front wings and a snarling grille like its counterpart

in the animal world, the MkII was considered raffish, fast, sexy and smart. It was more of a cad's car than a classic family saloon. Larry reckons he copped a lot of flak from friends at the time.

The MkII is also renowned for its one-piece 'uni-body' full of curves, ovals and tricky skills, a complicated body shape, infamous for rust traps. It was hardly a low-maintenance, economical, domestic motoring experience, but then Larry's burning passion for Jaguars overrode such trifles. He always suspected that his car would be an ongoing project, and he says Sunday afternoons in the garage working on the Jag, with the radio on, became 'therapy'.

STREET APPEAL

Under Sir William Lyons, Jaguar was constantly pushing boundaries and honing its designs. The MkII built upon the foundation laid by the MkI, retaining similar XK engines but incorporating several important design updates. These changes included a widened rear differential and improved visibility, featuring 18% more window glass, which was chrome-lined. Additionally, the MkII came equipped with Dunlop disc brakes on all four wheels. While many enhancements were cosmetic, such as a walnut veneer interior, a centrally located console, leather upholstery, and a heater ducted into the passenger compartment, there were also performance options available. The MkII offered three engine choices: 2.4, 3.4, or 3.8-litres, as well as a Daimler 2.5-litre V8-powered model that shared the same body design as the MkII [Jaguar bought Daimler from the BSA group in 1960 – Ed.]. They remained in production until 1967 when the 3.8-litre motor was phased out and the 2.4- and 3.4-litre engine models were rebadged as 240s, 340s, and the Daimler V8-250, identified by their 'slimline' bumper bars and the latter by its fluted grille and boot lid light for the Daimlers. By 1968, Mk2 models were assembled alongside the even more streamlined XJ6, and MkII production ended in 1969.

SETTING THE PACE

Larry's 3.4 Mark II is a four-speed manual gearbox model, with a straight-six 3442cc engine (210bhp) and twin SU HD6 carburettors. A new MkII was capable of 0–60mph in 8.6 seconds with a supposed top speed of 125mph. Larry managed 18.8 seconds from a standing start at a club event, the Sybil Lupp Trophy Sprint, and he has clocked his car at 100mph on the Desert Road.

"But, I felt I was floating." At the hands of racing legends like Denny Hulme, Roy Salvadori, Mike Parkes and Peter Nocker, the MkII, and particularly the 3.8-litre models, proved themselves in saloon-racing competition.

Often associated with the British gentry, MkIIs gained notoriety in 1963, as getaway cars for gangsters after Ronnie Biggs's crew who employed them during their infamous train heist. Ironically, Britain's boys in blue used

> "Larry's burning passion for Jaguars overrode such trifles"

Grace, Space and Pace
JB34
MK2 Jaguar 3.4 1962

them too. The Who sang an ode to Jaguar on their 1967 *The Who Sell Out* album and at the end of the decade, the MkII helped define British movie cool in Michael Caine's *Get Carter*. There was never a better endorsement for the MkII at the time. It was said to be the ride of choice for legendary speedster, the late Stirling Moss.

SOMETHING ELSE

As a family car, Larry says, "I used to take my kids down to the snow and think nothing of whipping down to Thames or somewhere. We have been on a tow truck once or twice; it's not a good look. Nothing major, a petrol pump that wouldn't prime and the odd flat battery, that sort of thing. I have been lucky, as an old car can be full of surprises, so you just don't know." →

Compared to the modern driving experience, he reckons gear changing in his MkII requires some patience, particularly the little double de-clutch required from fourth to third, as Larry explains: "Letting the clutch out is a skill. So is getting the revs right for a smooth take-off. It doesn't have synchro in first, so you virtually have to stop. This is the famous Moss box; straight-cut gear. The gears have to mesh, but if they both meet on the ridge, then you have to start again. Anybody who has a Moss box knows how special they are!"

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Soon after purchasing his Jaguar, Larry discovered an unusual anomaly under the hood; an engineering mystery that has puzzled him ever since. "My car is different as there is no central adjustment to the timing chain, which is usually accessed in the front of the head, through a hole where the breather would normally be. Ordinarily, there is an eccentric gear which is loosened to make adjustments to the chain with a special key. Instead, on my car, the top chain is adjusted by a hydraulic tensioner. This is situated to one side of the chain carrier and has an oil-feed from the bottom of the block."

On closer investigation, he found that the chain carrier assembly had a different casting, too, to make room for the tensioner.

"To loosen the chain, I have to relieve the tension slipper, which is a bit tricky given its location. Like all those slippers, one can push it back then lock it with an Allen key, but one false move and something could drop into the engine, not a very satisfactory state of affairs."

Larry could find no evidence of this system in any Jaguar manual, and there was no matching part number for his chain carrier casting either, so in 1985, he wrote to the Jaguar factory.

"They denied all knowledge of that kind of modification, but did admit that the method was used on their racing cars so that the breather hole could be used for mechanical fuel injection."

Join us in the next issue of *New Zealand Classic Car*, No. 403, and follow Larry's efforts to uncover this mystery in his Jaguar engine. ■

1955 JAGUAR D-TYPE

4.2 Litre Straight Six
5 Speed Manual

$599,990

NZ new, just 1,480km, this skillfully handcrafted recreation was built by Tempero Coach and Motor Company and first registered in 2011. Powered by a finely tuned 4.2 Litre Jaguar Straight Six DOHC engine putting out circa 300hp coupled to a 5 speed Borg-Warner gearbox and weighing in at just over 800kg this car is an absolute rocket, not for the faint hearted.

$2,250,000

2020 BRABHAM BT62

5.4 V8 NA 700hp, competition track car, 6 speed Holinger, Pneumatic Shift. Just 4,500km, as raced by Shane Van Gisbergen in the six hour endurance race at Highlands.

$99,990

2013 ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE

2nd Gen 4.7 Litre V8 coupe, only 49,500km, Speedshift II gearbox, new front pads and rotors, new battery, freshly complied and serviced with 12 month WOF.

$99,990

1984 PORSCHE 911 TARGA

3.2 Litre Flat six 'Boxer' with 5 speed Rennshift manual transmission, 189,750km. A timeless classic that seamlessly blends performance, style, and character.

$45,990

2016 MERCEDES-BENZ C63

4.0 Litre V8 Twin Turbo, 108,500km, NZ nav with bluetooth and an amazing Burmester Sound System, 0-100kmph 3.6 seconds, Nine Airbags, Distronic plus, Collision prevention assist plus.

$49,990

1971 FORD MUSTANG

NZ New 5.0 Litre V8 Fastback Coupe, 125,850km, dual exhausts, deep-dish steering wheel, twin-gauge cluster. Recently serviced, strong-running, and full of character. Don't miss out!

$49,990

1987 PORSCHE 928 S4

5.0 V8 6 Speed Manual, a captivating blend of power and sophistication, combining classic Porsche design with muscular performance, luxurious leather seating.

$54,990

2014 JAGUAR F-TYPE

3.0 V6 Supercharged Coupe, 8 Speed Paddleshift, just 48,500km, beautiful example in Ammonite Grey, 340hp at your right foot! Sumptuous half leather/half suede interior with dual climate.

$11,990

1973 TRIUMPH 2000

NZ New, 2.0 Litre, 83,955km, buckskin vinyl interior, loop pile carpet, NZ style wooden door cappings. You will be hard pushed to find a 52 year old Triumph in better condition than this one.

$49,990

2008 MASERATI GRAN TURISMO

4.2 Litre V8, 6 Speed ZF Auto with Paddleshift, just 55,000km, 0-60 mph in just 5.2 seconds, top speed of 177 mph, premium leather upholstery, dual-zone climate control and much more.

$29,990

2011 JAGUAR XJL

5.0 V8 380hp, 8 Speed Paddleshift, 74,125km, luxury full-size sedan that blends British elegance with sporty performance. LED Daytime Running Lights and bi-xenon headlights.

$169,990

2007 LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO SPYDER

5.0 Litre V10, 4WD, 500hp, E-Gear, Front lift kit, custom paint in 'Gulf' blue, be quick! Electric roof, comprehensive service history, no expense spared.

$41,990

2012 MASERATI GRAN TURISMO

NZ new 4.2 Litre V8, 6 Speed ZF Auto, gloss black with tan leather, electric seats, dual zone climate control, Beautifully presented in the best colour combo! 100,000km.

$79,990

2012 MASERATI GRAN TURISMO

NZ new, 4.7 Litre V8 Martini Coupe, just 42,000km, looks fabulous with Martini Livery, Aftermarket exhaust system means you will hear this car coming before you see it.

$159,990

1999 FERRARI 355 SPIDER

3.5 Litre V8, 380hp, Beautifully presented NZ new 355 with full service history, this two seat, mid engined V8 with a Pininfarina styled body is arguably one of the best looking Ferraris of all time.

$44,990

2010 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL FLYING SPUR

6.0 W12 Twin, 4WD 550hp, Torsen-based permanent all-wheel drive system, adaptive air suspension, continuous damping control. Front massage seats.

$159,990

1997 DODGE VIPER GTS COUPE

6 speed manual, 8.0L V10, super low km's - 44,500 miles, amazing condition, 2nd Gen Viper are becoming collectable – beats money in the bank! Be the coolest car on the road!

Andrew Farrow
P: 027 576 5576
E: andrew@efmc.co.nz

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Make A Date With AYRBURN CLASSIC

20-22 FEBRUARY 2026

Organisers are excited about the strong response to entries for the 2026 Ayrburn Classic, with some classes already fully booked. Don’t miss out on a chance to be at this world-class event this summer!

Spaces are filling fast in both the Ayrburn Classic and Show Field classes, with other categories rapidly approaching full capacity. There is little doubt that 2026 will see this world-class event becoming New Zealand's most exciting festival of motoring.

If you have been considering an entry, then contact Ayrburn Classic's, Chief Car Curator, Jonathan Paape, now: Jonathan.paape@ayrburn.com

Join us and immerse yourself and your family in the stunning alpine vista of Queenstown and be entertained by the welcoming attractions of the Ayrburn Precinct. Savour the fresh mountain air and absorb the amazing alpine backdrops to a glittering display of motoring classics, customs and motoring history seldom seen together in the botanical garden like setting that is the Ayrburn Precinct. The Precinct and grounds are breathtaking, with something for all. You can enjoy your weekend at Ayrburn; eating, drinking and enjoying the displays throughout the restaurants, bars and grounds as you soak in the ambiance of 2026 Ayrburn Classic.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

The Ayrburn Classics Partnership Manager, Matt Smith was thrilled with the level of industry support for this event.

"Industry support from dealers and trade exhibitors has been amazing. All display sites have been taken up, so we are going to see quite a show."

CURATOR'S MISSION

The Ayrburn Classic's, Chief Car Curator, Jonathan Paape comes from a background of family involvement in motorsport for many years. His enthusiasm for all motoring tastes knows no bounds. He has put in an incredible amount of work behind the scenes for Ayrburn Classic 2026 and is joined by an equally knowledgeable car enthusiast, his wife, Janet, on the judging team.

Jonathan is looking forward to the 2026 Ayrburn Classic becoming an outstanding event, with the response to the call for entries so far.

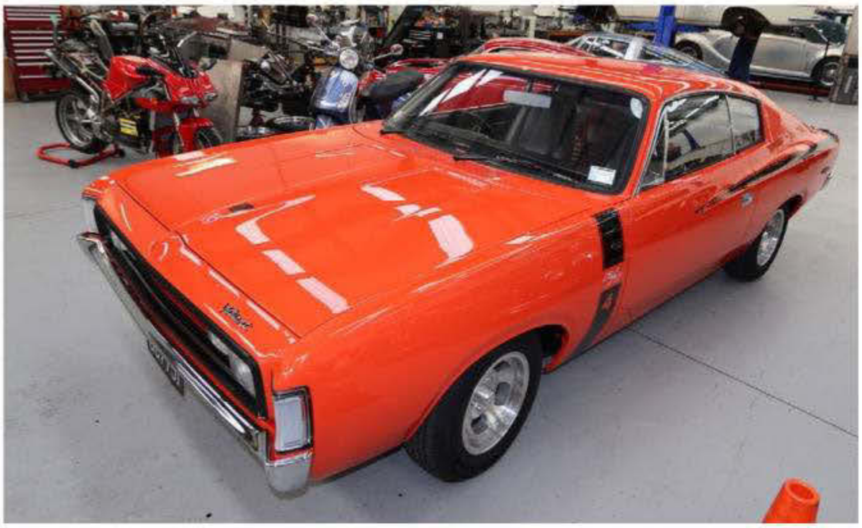
"I'm thrilled to report that we are now well past the halfway mark in the Classic judged section. The response has been outstanding, particularly in our Maranello Magic Ferrari Class and the Mustang Stampede, which Bruce Lewis is running with great effect. Not only will this set us up for a spectacular 2026, but it will also put healthy pressure on

Giltraps are back with McLaren for 2026

Ferrari F40

Shelby Mustang KR500

Gordy Crozier, Mustangs has two great examples of the big Fords, a 1966 Sprint 200 a six-cylinder model, something different to the usual V8-powered Mustangs. This car featured in New Zealand Classic #401. In 2026, Gordy is bringing the whole family south to Ayrburn



Auto Restorations, has restored the ex-Rod Coppins racing Chrysler Charger featured in New Zealand Classic Car # 400. Now based in Taupo, with Mike Todd, the car is a superbly restored example of one of the great Australasian racing saloons.

Julian Ball, Alfa Romeo 8c 2300 Touring Spider

owners to secure their place early for 2027.”

A pleasing aspect so far from the entries received is the number of confirmations from North Island enthusiasts, which is very gratifying.

MAKING A SUCCESSFUL AYRBURN CLASSIC 2026

In 2025, the inaugural Ayrburn Classic began with a small team running a new style of motoring event not seen before in New Zealand. For the 2026 event, that team has expanded.

Headed by Ayrburn Classic’s Event Manager, Katherine Flanagan alongside Ayrburn Precinct General Manager, Kieran Turnbull, Marketing Manager, Ella James, Partnerships Manager Matt Smith and Chief Car Curator, Jonathan Paape.

With more sponsors, partners and car owners joining in 2026, we have managed to build significantly on 2025. Ayrburn have invested in additional infrastructure, systems and opened up grounds to allow our next Classic to grow further, building upon an already strong foundation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF AYRBURN CLASSIC 2026

- Our oldest entry is pre-1900
- The most valuable entry is worth US $15 million
- Every commercial space is sold, double from last year. Matt Smith is to thank for that
- The Friday cocktail party will be buzzing with 500 classic entrants and partners
- There will be a Family Zone providing something for young and old, across the weekend

AYRBURN
CLASSIC
LIVE AUCTION
SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY DRIVE

Welcome to the inaugural Ayrburn Classic Auction – an exclusive automotive auction set in the stunning surrounds of Ayrburn Estate, Queenstown. This prestige auction will bring together rare classics, high-performance icons, and passionate collectors for an unforgettable day of motoring excellence, fine food, and elegant atmosphere.

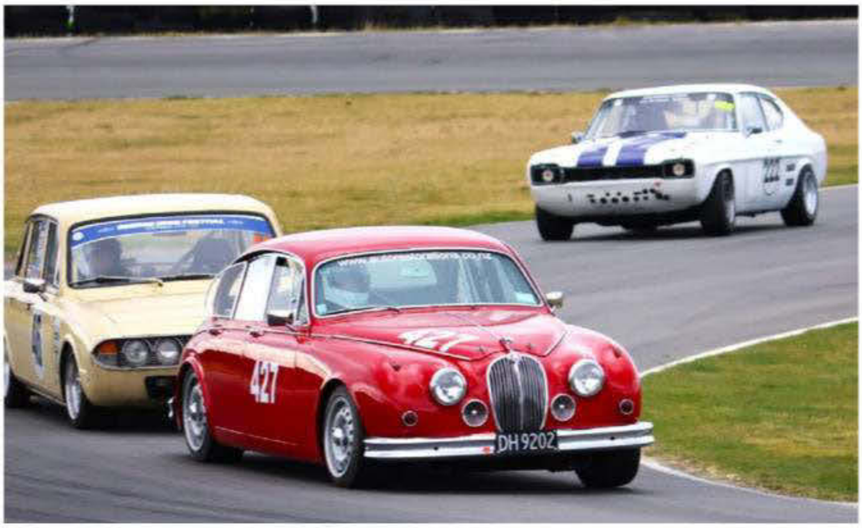
Proudly hosted by Sunday Drive, the Ayrburn Classic Auction marks a new chapter in New Zealand’s automotive scene – blending curated cars, premium hospitality, and live bidding theatre like never before.

We are now inviting expressions of interest from both bidders and sellers. If you’d like to register to bid in person or receive the auction catalogue, please use the links or QR code below.

Likewise, if you own a special vehicle and would like to consign to this auction, you can submit your car using the seller info page via the links.

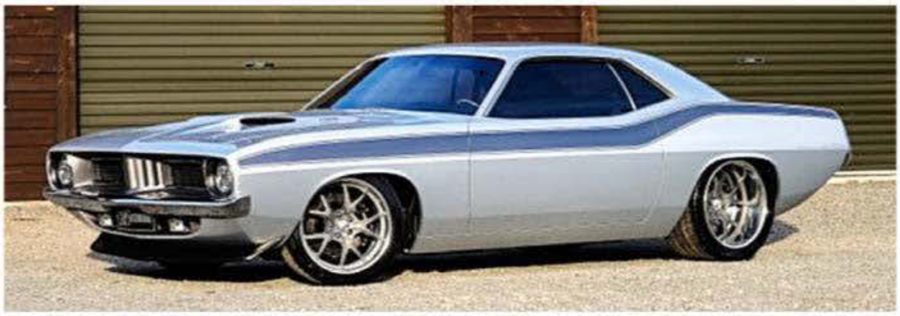
Spaces are limited. We are curating a maximum of 40 premium consignments, so whether you’re looking to sell or secure your dream car, now’s the time to register your interest.

http://sundaydrive.co.nz/auctions

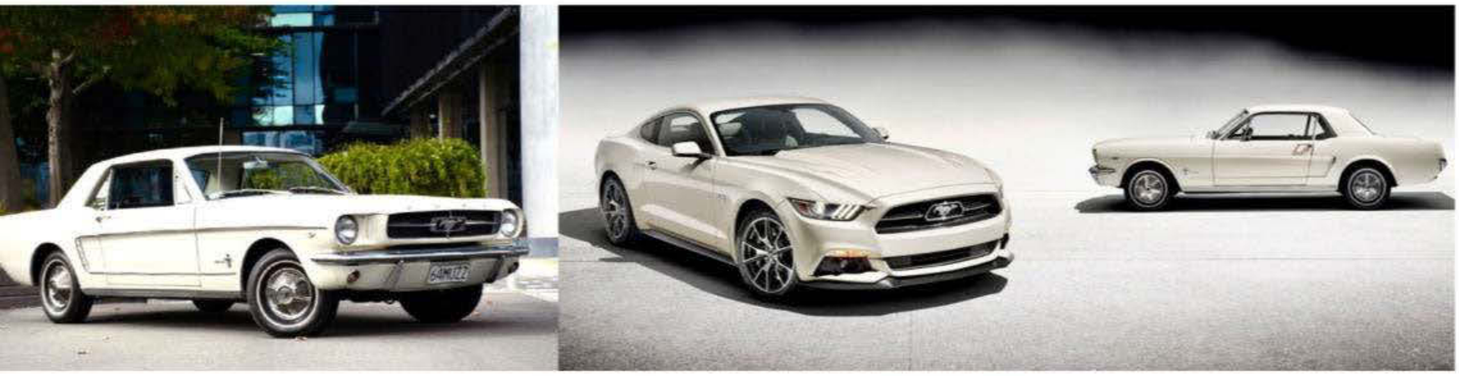


Christchurch racing driver Burt Govan drives one of the few remaining Jaguar Mark II saloons racing in New Zealand. It is a car he has owned and campaigned at everything from hill climbs to circuit racing for many years. Always immaculate, for those who know their Jaguars, this car has many intriguing features set off by an attractive set of alloy racing wheels.

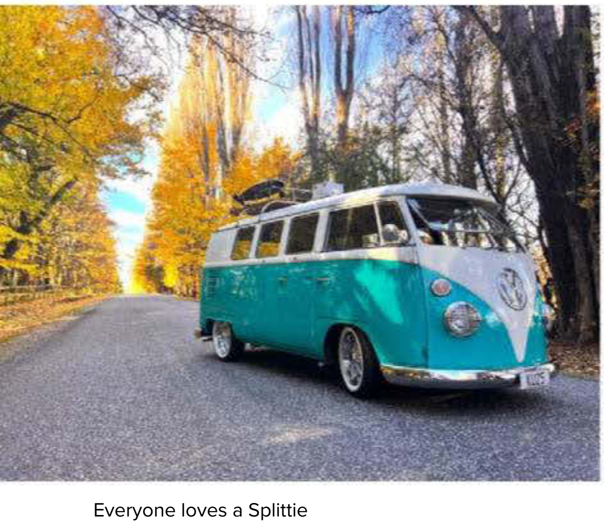
Wayne Perkins Camaro, Wayne formed the Pre-78 Historic racing saloons a couple of seasons ago and the popular classic



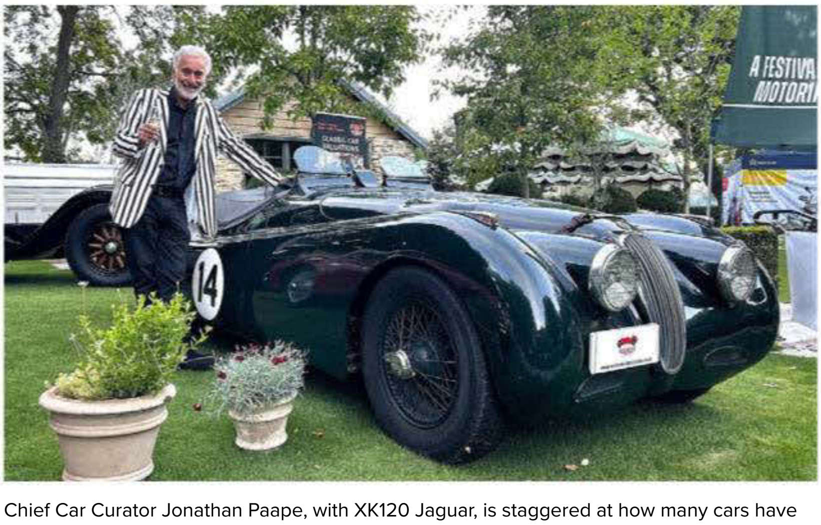
Phil Adamson, Plymouth Cuda. Christchurch car restorer Phil brought his lovely Maserati 450S recreation to the first Ayrburn festival and is looking to head south with some special cars for the 2026 event



Garry Jackson, Mustangs, includes a 50th Anniversary car and his 1964 Mustang, a previous feature car in New Zealand Classic Car magazine. Both in white, these cars provide a great example of the evolution of this iconic car



Everyone loves a Splittie



Chief Car Curator Jonathan Paape, with XK120 Jaguar, is staggered at how many cars have come out of the woodwork

Ewan Macpherson's outstanding racing Ford Anglia is a remarkable example in the colours of a Broadspeed Racing UK, Ford Anglia. The little car has posted some remarkable results in Ewan's hands and is one of the best-presented racing saloons in the country.

Brian Stewart's GT40 recreation is an exact copy of the real Ford GT40 of the '60s. Brian assisted David Brown of Classic Car Developments in Invercargill to build this amazingly detailed car over a period of nineteen years! The car has also featured in New Zealand Classic Car magazine No.388 in August 2023 and is currently for sale. His car always attracts interested onlookers no matter where he goes.

Lisa Brown Chevrolet Pick up 1946

Lamborghini Aventador – just one of the cool cars you will see there.

- Saturday's, Sunday Drive's Live Car Auction of 40 classic cars will spice things up
- There are plenty more surprises in the pipeline.

The weekend of 20-22 February 2026 is going to be one for the memory books - make sure you're ready, engines revving and secure your tickets at www.ayrburnclassic.com. ■

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- American Classics Pre-1950
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- Best of British Post-1960 Modern
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- Exceptional Euro Pre-1970 Classic
- Maranello Magic
- Mustang Stampede
- Race Cars
- Supercars
- Tribute Cars
- Vintage Cars

WINTON

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Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2026 Ayrburn Classic. It is our second Ayrburn Classic, and we believe we are well on track to build on what we started last year and create something truly world-class.

We have made a number of changes to the format, which sees a lot more cars on display and a lot more movement of the cars around the stunning grounds of Ayrburn.

It is quite something to be able to look at all these beautiful vehicles in situ, but combined with the sound and the smell of many of them gracefully driving through the grounds, we are promising a sensory overload!

Our show area has greatly expanded, and more fabulous bars and restaurants have been opened. Importantly, the Winton design team has been able to craft the landscape specifically with the Ayrburn Classic in mind. With the Southern Alps as our backdrop, there can be no more beautiful place to display such a stunning collection of cars.

The Tour de Elegance will be a great thing to be a part of and will raise money for several very worthy local charities. And imagine the look on the kids' faces as we parade past Arrowtown Primary en route to the amazing views offered from our turnaround point at Coronet Peak. Take some time to enjoy the scenery as we drive down Speargrass Flat Rd, one of the most stunning and definitely the most photographed roads in New Zealand.

The fun goes all day and night with the grand opening party on Friday evening and the Summer Gala on Saturday evening. Dress to impress and dance along to some amazing musicians and sunset scenery that will stay in your mind forever. And ladies, don't miss the fashions in the field on Sunday, with some of New Zealand's best designers on show.

In our quest to have the Ayrburn Classic recognized in the same realm as Goodwood and Pebble Beach, we are ever grateful for the incredible support of all our exhibitors, our sponsors and our guests. I am confident that the talented team we have put in place to run the Ayrburn Classic will put New Zealand firmly on the map at this level of classic car shows, which will be something we can all be very proud of and enjoy for many years to come.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Chris Meehan

CEO

Special Report

FORD JOINS DAFFODIL RALLY FOR CANCER

WHEN PASSION FOR MOTORING POWERS HOPE

There are car events, and then there's the Daffodil Rally for Cancer — a rolling display of horsepower, heritage, and heart.

By Kaaren Smylie, VCC Daffodil Day Rally National Coordinator

Since 2017, with only a two-year pit stop during the COVID pandemic, the Vintage Car Club of New Zealand (VCC) has teamed up with Ford New Zealand and the Cancer Society to turn the nation's love of motoring into a force for good. In that short time, the event has raised more than $250,000 to support Kiwis affected by cancer — and it's only getting bigger.

COUNTRYWIDE RESOURCES

At the heart of this national effort are three powerhouses. The VCC, with its 36 branches across the country, brings together thousands of members united by a shared passion for preserving motoring history.

The Cancer Society, through its 35 divisions, stands on the front lines offering care, education, and research funding for the one in three New Zealanders whose lives are touched by cancer.

And then there's Ford New Zealand — with 32 dealerships, over a century of heritage, and a reputation as one of the most respected automotive brands in the country.

FORD-MORE THAN A SPONSORSHIP

Ford's involvement is more than sponsorship; it's a statement. A brand woven into New Zealand's motoring DNA,

Ford lends the rally both credibility and reach, ensuring it's not just another date on the calendar but a landmark event.

The Daffodil Rally is a public celebration open to all motoring enthusiasts. If it's got wheels, it's welcome. From vintage treasures and classic cruisers to trucks, motorcycles, hot rods, motorhomes, and caravans — every type of vehicle can take part.

And it's not just about what's in the garage; it's about who's in the passenger seat. Friends, family, neighbours, and

Nelson-Tasman VCC Rally

Regional Ford

Collecting on Stewart Island

Macauley Ford staff with a cheque for $9000

entire communities come together for the day, whether they're driving in the convoy or cheering from the footpath.

Every vehicle is decked out in yellow — the colour of hope for those navigating a cancer journey. The sight of hundreds of daffodil-adorned cars rolling out is more than a visual feast; it's a show of solidarity for people facing one of life's toughest challenges. The rally transforms the simple act of driving into something profound, using the joy of motoring to fuel awareness and raise much-needed funds that stay right here in New Zealand.

CANCER AFFECTS US ALL

Cancer affects us all. Whether it's a family member, a friend, or even ourselves, the statistics are sobering. But the Daffodil Rally is a reminder that we are far from powerless. With the backing of Kia Ora Magazine, the muscle of Ford, and the passion of the VCC, this event proves that when heritage, horsepower, and heart come together, extraordinary things can happen.

So, polish the chrome, fire up the engine, and join the yellow wave. Because when the Daffodil Rally hits the road, we're not just driving — we're driving change.

FORD NZ COMMITMENT

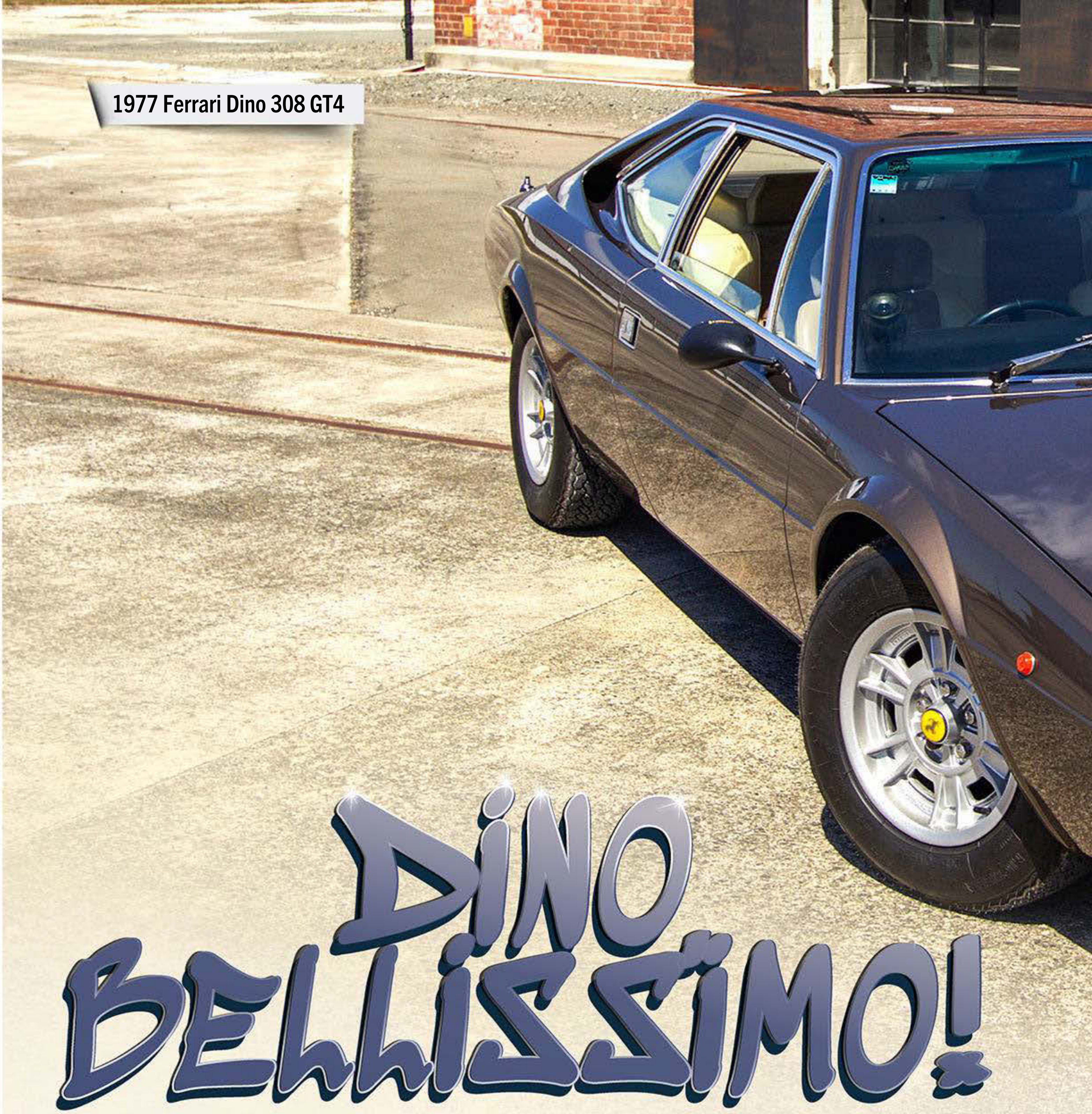
Ford dealerships across the country were heavily involved on Daffodil Day, with many clearing their display areas to accommodate VCC members and numerous other groups turning out to support an important public family day.

Annaliese Atina, Managing Director, Ford New Zealand, had this to say about this significant move to support the Cancer Society and the VCC.

"What an amazing series of events across NZ, congratulations Kaaren, and thank you for bringing it together. At Ford New Zealand, we are proud to support the Vintage Car Club's Daffodil Rally for Cancer and the incredible work it does in partnership with the New Zealand Cancer Society. The event brings together communities, enthusiasts, and families in a uniquely Kiwi way – celebrating our shared passion for motoring while raising vital funds for a cause that touches so many lives," she said, emphasising the company's recognition of its importance.

"Supporting the Daffodil Rally reflects Ford's commitment to standing alongside organisations that make a real difference in the health and well-being of New Zealanders. It's inspiring to see the classic car community mobilise around such an important cause, and we're honoured to play our part in helping drive awareness and funding for cancer support services across the country." ■

1977 Ferrari Dino 308 GT4



DINO BELLISSIMO!

FORGOTTEN, BEWITCHING FERRARI, AND A DRIVER'S DELIGHT

Frowned upon by the Tifosi when first launched in 1974, the Dino 308 GT4 acquired an undeserved reputation, seen as not a true Ferrari road car. The little Bertone wedge soon silenced its detractors with its capability as an excellent handling road and track car, and a 2+2 design layout that would influence Ferrari's thinking for decades

By Quinton Taylor, Photography by Quinton Taylor

After nearly 50 years of looking after teeth, retired dentist Alistair Reekie is enjoying spending more time working with his eclectic garage of classics. Earlier this year, he and his son Nick decided that it was time to devote some serious attention to Alistair's long-serving, red 1977 Dino 308 GT4, a car he's owned since about 1979 and enjoyed immensely.

"I bought it in Auckland and drove it home to Invercargill. It's not a Pininfarina; it was designed by Bertone, and it's similar to a lot of Fiats. It was always considered the ugly one, but I thought, you know, you look at them, and boy, they got it right. It's like a Fiat X/19, but bigger. Even the door handles look like they came from a Fiat."

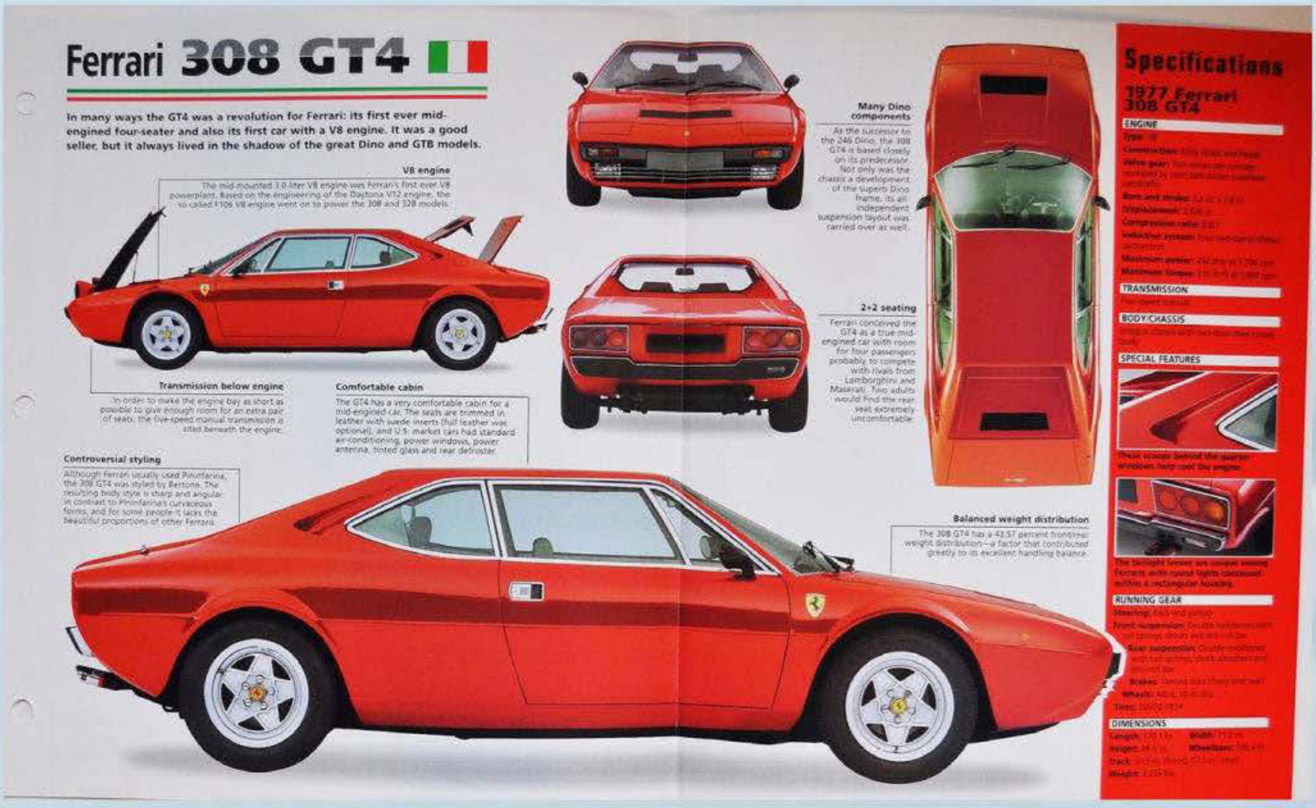
KEEPING THE DINO GOING

Dinos were a change of direction for Ferrari. A miffed Pininfarina built most of Ferrari's road-going cars, so this first effort by designer Marcello Gandini working at Bertone at the time was not a popular move.

Ferrari was keen to create another level of its cars, hence, initially, the Dino 246GT and GTS branded cars and a new range of V6 engines designed by Vittorio Jano, clothed in Pininfarina's delightful, rounded lines. They were well received, and today the little Dinos are highly sought after.

Bertone was allowed to design the Dino 308GT4 and he used the talents of Marcello Gandini. The striking wedge could not have been further away in design ethos from the previous Dino shape. Reminiscent of the Lamborghini Urraco styling and Fiat X/19, it no doubt encouraged criticism of Gandini's wedge styling as it was too close to a host of Gandini designs, such as the Lancia Stratos, and Maserati Kamsin and it wasn't really a Ferrari, was it?

The layout, especially in the interior, was very much as per Gandini's Lamborghini Urraco. It's a roomy cockpit, which Alistair finds is a surprise to sit back into its nicely light-fawn-coloured leather and cloth insert, restored seats. As he ably describes sitting in the low-slung Dino as almost like "dragging your posterior on the ground."



Ferrari 308 GT4

In many ways the GT4 was a revolution for Ferrari: its first ever mid-engined four-seater and also its first car with a V8 engine. It was a good seller, but it always lived in the shadow of the great Dino and GTB models.

V8 engine

The mid-mounted 3.0-liter V8 engine was Ferrari's first ever V8 powerplant. Based on the engineering of the Daytona V12 engine, the so-called F106 V8 engine went on to power the 308 and 328 models.

Transmission below engine

In order to make the engine bay as short as possible to give enough room for an extra pair of seats, the five-speed manual transmission is sited beneath the engine.

Comfortable cabin

The GT4 has a very comfortable cabin for a mid-engined car. The seats are trimmed in leather with suede inserts (full leather was optional), and U.S. market cars had standard air-conditioning, power windows, power antenna, tinted glass and rear defroster.

Controversial styling

Although Ferrari usually used Pininfarina, the 308 GT4 was styled by Bertone. The resulting body style is sharp and angular in contrast to Pininfarina's curvaceous forms, and for some people it lacks the beautiful proportions of other Ferraris.

Many Dino components

As the successor to the 246 Dino, the 308 GT4 is based closely on its predecessor. Not only was the chassis a development of the superb Dino frame, its all independent suspension layout was carried over as well.

2+2 seating

Ferrari conceived the GT4 as a true mid-engined car with room for four passengers probably to compete with rivals from Lamborghini and Maserati. Two adults would find the rear seat extremely uncomfortable.

Balanced weight distribution

The 308 GT4 has a 43:57 percent front/rear weight distribution—a factor that contributed greatly to its excellent handling balance.

Specifications

1977 Ferrari 308 GT4

ENGINE

TRANSMISSION

BODY/CHASSIS

SPECIAL FEATURES

RUNNING GEAR

DIMENSIONS

Ferrari 308 GT4 1973-1980 specs brochure.

He liked its dark, metallic brown colour.

"Most Ferraris tend to be red, and this one was that colour when it came into New Zealand from Huddersfield in England. I enjoyed it, but I don't know why I bought it, really. It was probably just that I wanted something zoopy. It was well-looked after, too. I had a friend, Jack McNamara, who looked after it, and he then moved to Manapouri, and then a young Simon Bradley at Midas Invercargill took care of it."

While the Ferrari was being restored at Pegasus Bay Restorations in Christchurch, Nick set about documenting its history, and this is where he found some interesting facts about it.

BERTONE'S FRESH APPROACH

Introduced at the 1973 Paris Motor Show, just one car was made that year, with production beginning in 1974. It would be the only production car designed by Bertone for Ferrari. Enzo Ferrari provided input into the driver and dashboard layout on a mockup, and the car, like the Dinos before it, was a tribute to his late son Dino, who died in 1956.

18
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"MOST FERRARIS TEND TO BE RED, AND THIS ONE WAS THAT COLOUR WHEN IT CAME INTO NEW ZEALAND"

Unfortunately, the Dino branding in Series 1 form didn't result in strong sales. It would be 1976 before Ferrari badges and the prancing horse badge appeared on the bodywork, along with many modifications in Series 2 cars. It would also be the only Ferrari 2+2 to be raced with factory support.

While being stripped in Christchurch, the Dino revealed a surprise, Nick recalls.

"The guys rang up and said they had found this funny-looking metallic brown colour while stripping the paint back. I thought we would paint it blue, but this find was a surprise. It's the original colour. They're worth huge money now, and they have really taken off. We went with the original colour and now it looks awesome."

Coincidentally, the colour is almost identical to Nick's Porsche 911. Ferrari gives the Italian name as Marrone Dino Metallizzato, or Marrone Dino.

A TALE TO TELL

Nick has been in touch with a Ferrari expert at a company in England, who, it turns out, knows this particular Dino quite well. The Dino was built in 1976.

"He drove the car out of France to their workshop in England, where it was sold," Nick explains.

A regular compiler of Ferrari videos, John Pogson of Huddersfield Garage, plans to make a video when he arrives from England, and Nick is looking forward to having a digital record of the car.

The story goes that as the Dino was introduced to compete with Porsche's successful 911, it proved slow to sell, being only a little stronger selling than the rival Lamborghini's Urraco and Maserati's Merak.

A happy Nick Reekie reunited with thew Ferrari

Adrian Le Hanne's 1975 Dino 308 GT4 in Marrone Metallizzato, Berlin Photo 2017 Mr Choppers

Work in Progress rust gone.

JF 8215
FERRARI

JF 8215
FERRARI

JF 8381
JF 8215

D42 - Competition pair Porshce 911 and Ferrari 308 GT4

Metallic brown is a rare colour on any Ferrari, and when public feeling is generally 'all Ferraris are red', then sales are going to be a challenge.

"The story goes that some 20 odd Dino Ferraris were sitting out in the weather and, of course, deteriorating in the English wet weather. Someone got the idea to paint them red and help sales, which is how Alistair's Ferrari arrived in New Zealand painted red."

CHANGED REPUTATION

There has been a surprising change in collector attitudes to the 308 GT4 in recent years. The 'forgettable Ferrari' has been recognised for what it is. It's not only a great handling package, able to seat four, but it has also proved to be very reliable when looked after.

Once behind the wheel, that short, sharply sloping nose devoid of distractions gives the driver a commanding view of the road ahead, and the big glass area gives great all-around vision. Even out through the rear is not bad.

Routine servicing is always going to be a little more difficult with this type of layout, but access to the main servicing points through the mid-hatch is reasonably good. The Dino also has a usable boot space at the rear behind the engine

CHANGING HANDS

The Dino will now remain with Nick in Christchurch, and so far, it has been a period of fine-tuning the bank of Weber carburettors and getting those balanced,

SPECIFICATIONS

1977 FERRARI DINO 308GT4

Engine	Transverse mid-mounted all-alloy Tipo F106, 90 degree V8, water-cooled, flat plane crankshaft, two overhead camshafts per bank, two valves per cylinder, 2927cc.
Bore x stroke	81mm x 71mm
Comp. ratio	8.8:1
Power	188kW (255bvhp) at 7700rpm
Torque	284Nm (210lb Ft at 5000rpm
Fuel System	Four Weber DCNF carburettors
Ignition	Twin coils, one spark plug per cylinder, Magnetti Marelli 'Diunoplex' (early CDi) ignition developed for '67, F1 Dinos
Gearbox	5-speed manual transaxle behind the engine
Steering	Rack and pinion power-assisted
Brakes	4-wheel power-assisted discs
Fuel	80 litres
Tyres	4-205/70 VR14
Chassis	Steel tube spaceframe chassis with alloy body panels
Suspension F/R	Independent double wishbones coil springs and telescopic shock absorbers, front and rear stabiliser bars
Length	4300mm
Width	1800mm
Height	1180mm
Wheelbase	2550mm
Front/rear track	1460mm
Weight	1150kg
Performance	
Top Speed	250kph
Acceleration	0-100kph; 6.5seconds
Standing ¼	1.5seconds
Production	1973-1980 308 GT4, 1975-1980, 208 GT4, 2+2, 2-door Coupe
Designer	Marcello Gandini at Bertone

Alistair Reekie admires the refurbished seat.

which has proved a challenge, but the car is now running as it should, with still a little work to fine-tune it once it's run in.

Christchurch is fortunate and able to call on some expert technicians. I joined Nick and Alistair at The Separate Garage in Walker Street in the Christchurch CBD. A Porsche-dedicated shop, we found ourselves knee-deep in an array of Porsches of all models in various stages of repair, with Nick's brown Ferrari sitting central in the workshop.

Experienced Porsche technician, Boyce Paki's latest project on the hoist was a beautiful, freshly painted 964 Porsche in a sharp, green mica colour. Boyce fired up the little V8, now apparently running considerably better than it did earlier. It sounds quite unlike any V8 burble, emitting a sound good enough to raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

The engine and the performance are impressive, as I later experienced when Nick returned home with a lovely howl from that V8.

It's a snappy performer on the open road and has become a real toss-up for Nick as to which is the better car on the North Canterbury Roads around Nick's home: the Porsche or the Ferrari. A plus is the smooth gearshift, sitting in that stylish, polished metal gate and direct gear change.

In 2019, the best price achieved for a Dino 308 GT4, a 1975 model in Australia, was an AU$80,000 average. The current figure is a little more encouraging, with current prices hitting a high of AU$123,000 in 2023 and AU$110,000 in 2024, with few cars in absolute top condition, normally around AU$48,000 to AU$63,800, is the going rate, no doubt because these little cars are a driver's delight! Nick's verdict "If I was going up country, I would take the Dino everytime over the Porsche as it is so much fun to drive!" ■

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KUMEU HOT ROD SHOW 2026

KEEPING THE WHEELS TURNING TOGETHER

As the engines fire up and the chrome begins to gleam, there's a familiar buzz rolling back into Kumeu this summer. The Kumeu Hot Rod Show 2026, running 16th, 17th & 18th January, is set to return bigger, bolder, and brighter than ever — a celebration of horsepower, craftsmanship, and community spirit that has long stood as a highlight on every car enthusiast's calendar.

For decades, this iconic event has drawn gearheads from across New Zealand and beyond — uniting classic car lovers, builders, and families for a weekend of nostalgia, innovation, and good old-fashioned Kiwi camaraderie. From roaring V8s to meticulously restored cruisers, the Kumeu Showgrounds will once again become a living gallery of automotive art, shining a light on the passion and dedication that fuel this vibrant scene.

But 2026 isn't just another year. It's a year where the show's message carries extra weight. In tough times — when costs are climbing, workshops are under pressure, and small businesses are feeling the squeeze — the Hot Rod community has a unique chance to rally around one another. Events like Kumeu aren't just about showcasing machines; they're about keeping the spirit of the industry alive. Every ticket sold, every handshake shared, and every local supplier supported helps sustain the networks that make our motoring culture possible.

As organisers prepare to open the gates, there's a shared understanding that this show is more than an event — it's a lifeline. It's a reminder that behind every polished hood and roaring engine is a team of passionate people who rely on each other to keep the dream rolling. Whether you're a seasoned builder, a weekend tinkerer, or simply a lover of chrome and curves, your presence makes a difference.

So, dust off the deck chairs, pack your sunscreen, and rev those engines. The Kumeu Hot Rod Show 2026, January 16–18, promises a weekend of nostalgia, excitement, and unity. Let's show that even in challenging times, when we stand together — as mates, makers, and motorheads — this industry will keep on cruising.

Kumeu Hot Rod Show 2026 – January 16th–18th, Kumeu Showgrounds. Stay tuned and support local.

1936 BUGATTI TYPE
BUGATTI
BUGATTI
BUGATTI ATLANTIC
"THE LOST CAR"
SPÉCIALITÉS ELECTRIQUES DE L'AUTO
DELCO-REMY
LAGONDA

THE JUKEBOX DINER

By Phil Noble, photography by Phil Noble and Richard Moore Hamilton, VCC

CLASSICS
JUKEBOX DINER
HWD763

BIG TREE
15 MILES BETTER
SHELL TRACTOR OILS
GARAG

Historic and Muscle Saloon Cars (HMSC) members enjoyed the delights of the Classics Museum in Hamilton for its AGM, with the added extras of the museum and its amazing collection of cars and motoring memorabilia.

TOM'S ECLECTIC COLLECTION

Located in Hamilton, the Classics Museum is a vibrant tribute to our automotive heritage, founded by Hamilton businessman Tom Andrews. Opening its doors in 2012, the museum began as a practical solution to house Andrews' passion for classic cars, vintage bikes, and automobilia – eventually evolving into one of the city's most popular attractions.

Tom Andrews is a self-made local entrepreneur who turned his childhood fascination into a sprawling collection into a purpose-built venue.

It consists of a rotating display of approximately 60 classic cars and motorcycles drawn from his private assemblage and car clubs, ranging from 1918-1980s. It's a stunning array of vehicles, including Auburns, Cadillacs, Chevrolet Bel Airs, a restored 1937 Bedford bus, and a Messerschmitt three-wheeled bubble car, while the centrepiece is a reproduction Bugatti Type 57S Atlantic Coupe.

EXTENSIVE MEMORABILIA

There is also an extensive petrol-memorabilia collection featuring vintage enamel signs, pumps, oil tins, and more – plus pedal cars, old toys, and scenes evoking early New Zealand life.

Visitors are greeted by the 1950s-themed Jukebox Diner, a 13m high façade of a Wurlitzer jukebox at its entrance. Enjoy burgers, shakes, breakfasts, and fun décor, including statues of Elvis and Betty Boop.

The Museum also hosts a monthly classic car show operated by the local Vintage Car Club (VCC) branch, as Richard Moore reports:

"A nice spring morning with no rain on the radar set the scene for another brilliant turn out of classics old and new at Classics Museum car park. The Jukebox Diner car of the day was awarded to a 1939 Ford coupe [LRF604] and runner up went to a 1972 Ford Falcon 500 coupe [OZ ICON]. Classics Museums cash prizes were awarded as follows. 3rd placed car a 1946 Ford Jailbar pickup [PLT454] Longest car a 1963 Cadillac convertible [SIXTI3] Furthest travelled went to a gentleman from Rotorua."

Two, what's in your Glove box prizes were awarded, one for a temperature gauge unit and the other for a carless day sticker.

Another very interesting Classics Car Meet.

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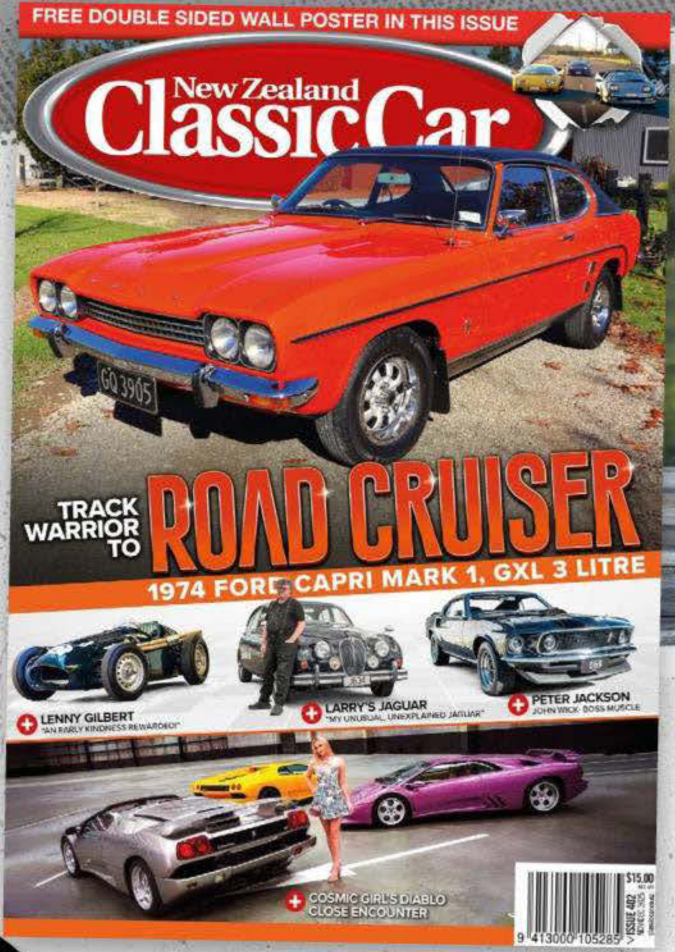
THE ORIGINAL CAR

New Zealand Classic Car magazine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TRIUMPH
FOR THE RIDE

From Le Mans to Daytona, the Shelby legend lives on in today's Shelby American's US operation, building Ford high-performance cars and trucks. A must-see on any bucket list is a visit to the Colorado Shelby Museum. Vaughan Wilson concludes his tour of this famous museum

By Vaughan Wilson, photography by Vaughan Wilson

CASTROL
GT350

SHELBY HEAVEN

Part 2

A Falcon drag car and a Ford Thunderbolt are sitting nearby. The1964 Thunderbolt is a Ford drag car with a 427cu in V8 sitting in a lightweight Fairlane. Further weight was shed by removing anything 'unnecessary', and glass was replaced with plexiglass. The cars were street legal, but only barely. Only one was made in 1963, 100 in 1964 and 2-cars in 1965, making this one of the rarest of Fords. This car helped Ford win the NHRA in 1964 with times in the 11-second range and with around 500bhp.

MUSTANG ALLEY

And then there were Mustangs. Again, there are numerous on display and too many to detail individually. Given that the SAC prides itself on having prominent and specific models, the Mustangs on display aren't any old Shelbys (if that's a thing) but instead highly specific examples of the original Shelby influence with the Ford Pony car.

First up is a 1966 GT350R, R for Racing, it was not street legal and was originally sold to Benito Lores of Lima Peru, where it raced for the first years of its life. The engine blew up, so it sat and sat until some clever Americans found it in 1984 and brought it home, where it has been through a series of collectors and restorations.

Next is the World's only GT350S from 1966. Built as a prototype to test the Paxton-Supercharger, it is technically a 1965 body, and it is the only '65 not painted in Wimbledon White, but instead in a green metallic and sold to Shelby's personal banker, who raced it during the 1960s.

GT350-THERE'S A NAME

With the new Mustang of 1967, the first 99 Shelbys were GT350s. The 100th was the first of the new GT500s with the big-block 428cu in Police Interceptor motor. This actual car is on display, having been owned for several years from new by Shelby American for promotional use before being sold second-hand in Colorado by Courtesy Ford. In 1979 a sixteen year old called Eric Johnson bought it with the help of his parents, and he has owned it ever since. Can you imagine driving a GT500 in High School, and that these cars were worth so little that you could afford them with money from a paper round or

> "WITH THE NEW MUSTANG OF 1967, THE FIRST 99 SHELBYS WERE GT350S."

babysitting? And can you imagine still owning your first car 45 years later?

KEN WELCOMES AT THE SECOND WING

The Cobras and Mustangs dominate the original building of the SAC. This second building houses the GT40 collection. This impressive collection has ten original GT40s (for the avid expert they are often referred to by their mark numbers rather than the insignia of GT40) along with other significant cars, the library, spare part storage, model cars and other memorabilia.

At the entrance is a bust of Ken Miles, adjacent to a display case and showing items belonging to Miles and parts of the Ford 'J' car he was driving when he died.

Arriving at the main room there is a board table to the right with eight framed paintings painted by Yuriy Shevchuk on the wall that collectively make up a panoramic of the Ford pits at the 1966 Le Mans race. The SAC cleverly had the eight paintings printed as one massive print against the rear wall around twenty metres long and six metres high with the various persons appearing as life size.

MEET THE DRIVERS

All the personalities associated with that

Pete Brock and John Ohlsen with Cobra Daytona Coupe body buck and 1963 Falcon in 1963.
BFGoodrich
Radial T/A

Coca-Cola
Coca-Cola
ICE COLD

amazing race are there including Henry 'Deuce' Ford II, Shelby (talking to Dan Gurney and AJ Foyt who technically weren't at the 1966, race but drove for Ford to first place in the 1967 Le Mans race when the Deuce wanted a more 'US flavour' to the drivers) and the kiwi drivers – all three of them! A proud moment for a kiwi to see his country represented so prominently and with such prestige.

On the right is Ken Miles and Denny Hulme talking In front of them is their actual car, the Number-1 Ford GT40 (known as 1015) that won that race but was recorded as second place due to a technicality (in case you missed the movie). Adjacent is the Ford that came third that day (car number 5 coded as 1016) driven by Bucknum and Hutcherson. Unbelievable!

McLaren and Amon are in the painting too, talking to the Deuce. Their car is in a collection in Texas. Three other famous Ford GT40 cars sit in front of the painting including a car used in the filming of the 1971 film Le Mans with Steve McQueen.

This room houses numerous other GT40s, again too many again to detail in this article but is also home to the 1963 Lola GT Mark 6, one of three produced. This was the predecessor to

GT
FORD PERFORMANCE
KEN-WON
UTAH

the Ford GT. Ford bought this car and one other from Lola along with Lola's owner, Eric Broadley to work on the GT40 project. This Lola is the predecessor to the GT40. It has the Ford 289 and is mated to a Colotti four speed transaxle. It was purchased by none other than racing driver Allen Grant in 1965 and he owns it to this day.

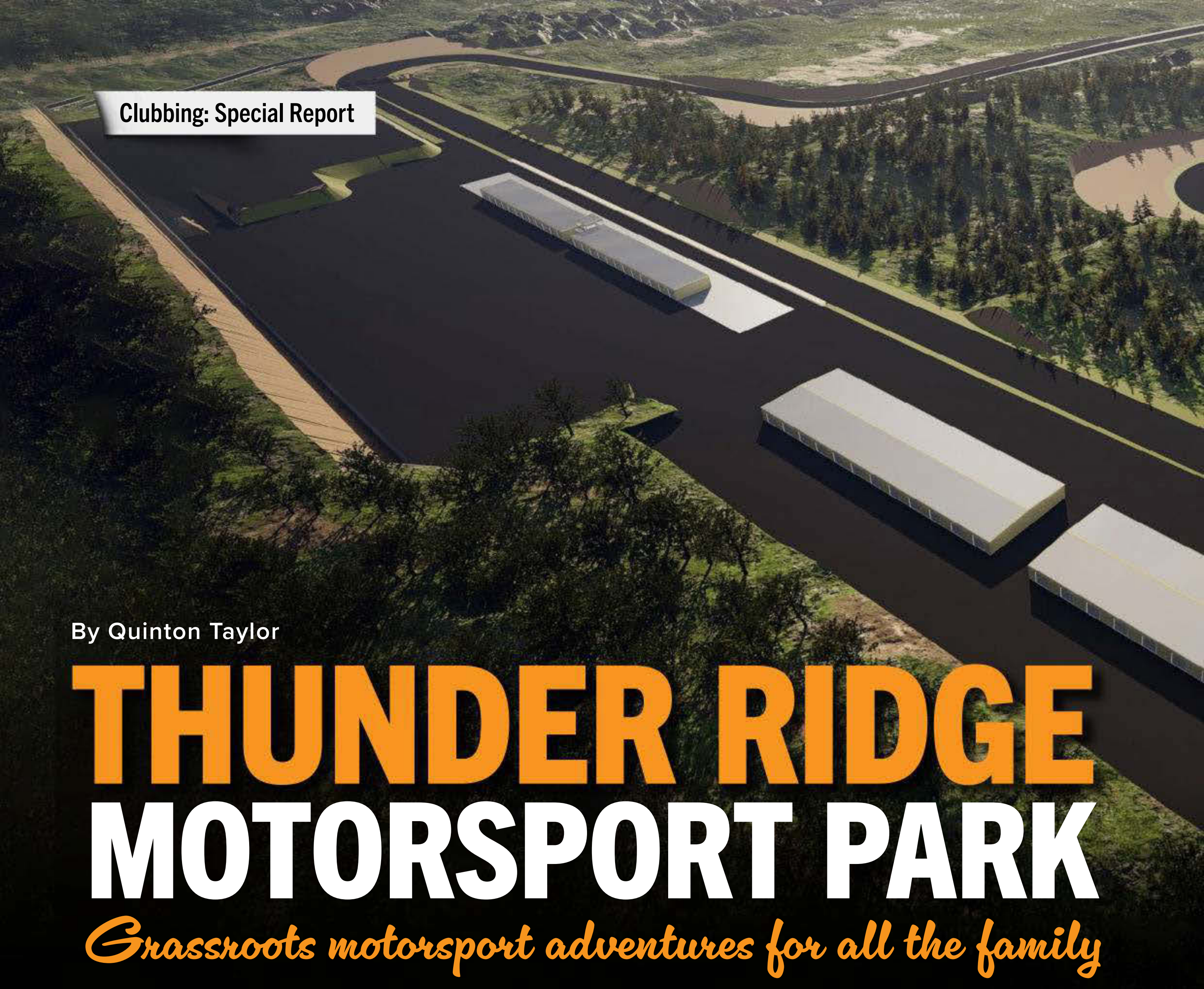
ROOM OF RARE FORD GTS

Lastly the room has not one, but two modern Ford GT's, one is a rare LM (Le Mans) version. Only twenty of these were produced, eight for North America, eight for Europe and four for the Ford family. The insignias fore and aft are made from a conrod from the Le Mans winning Ford GT of 2016. Now that is pedigree!

If you are a Ford fanatic, if you love the legendary Shelby's, if you are a history buff or have a strong connection with racing from the 1960's onwards, then the SAC is for you. If you simply appreciate an amazing museum, helpful staff, beautifully prepared exhibits and an endless level of memorabilia and historical information, then the SAC is also for you. This is a real treasure of a place with gold veins running deep, just like the Colorado of old.

Get there! ∎

HOLMAN
MOODY
535
Castrol
GOODYEAR



By Quinton Taylor

THUNDER RIDGE MOTORSPORT PARK

Grassroots motorsport adventures for all the family

Thanks to the foresight of three well-known New Zealand motorsport identities, motor racing, particularly in the North Island, will receive a substantial boost following official approval of the establishment of a world-class motorsport facility at Thunder Ridge Motorsport Park near Tauranga.

Prominent motorsport figures Tony Roberts, Roger Williams, and Gary Stirling have utilised their extensive experience as enthusiasts, racing drivers, track managers, and community-oriented business owners to establish this new motorsport circuit, drawing from their work in building the Hampton Downs racetrack.

Operating under the Thunder Ridge Motorsport Trust, this facility will serve as a dedicated venue for motorsport enthusiasts and individuals passionate about cars and motorcycles. It will also offer grassroots opportunities for newcomers to the sport, allowing them to learn and compete in a budget-friendly environment. The name itself conjures up a mix of emotions for enthusiasts, and I'll bet it won't be long before the popularity of the new circuit evokes the question, "You heading to 'Thunder' this weekend?"

Talking with Tony Roberts recently, he was pleased to see approval to develop the venue signed off by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council following more than two years of consultation.

"I think if we hadn't got a consultant on board, Glenn Snelgrove, who's the ex-CEO of Western Bay District Council, then we wouldn't have actually cracked it. It's been that hard."

The 70-hectare Thunder Ridge facility will host grassroots motorsport events, car club gatherings, and track days, providing a world-class and affordable venue for the Bay of Plenty, its surrounding regions, and all of New Zealand to enjoy a variety of activities.

WORLD-CLASS VENUE

The 3.2 km sealed circuit will feature eight corners, a 26m elevation change, and undulating terrain that reflects the natural landscape. High-speed banked corners, designed by experienced racing drivers, will enhance the track's performance. The team's experience in designing Hampton Downs Motorsport Park has enabled them to create a state-of-the-art circuit for TECT Park that meets rigorous international standards for motorsport venues.

BENEFITS OF A GARAGE AT THUNDER RIDGE- UNBEATABLE

The front straight will have 24 pit garages, a central control room, CCTV monitoring, an announcer's booth, and a timing room, with natural viewing

From left: Gary Stirling, Tony Roberts, Western Bay of Plenty Mayor James Denyer and Roger Williams

platforms for spectators on both sides. Applications are open for leasing a garage, as detailed in this issue of New Zealand Classic Car. These garages provide secure storage for private vehicle owners.

Leasing a garage at Thunder Ridge comes with numerous benefits, including free track days and complimentary access to all Thunder Ridge test, practice, and MotoTT days for the duration of your lease. You will also have the right to advertise, allowing you to display your sign on the pit wall at no additional cost. Furthermore, you have the option to sell these advertising rights if you choose.

Leases are transferable, meaning you can resell your lease at any time through Thunder Ridge management. There are no hidden fees, and all maintenance costs are fully covered within the lease, making it a great investment opportunity. By leasing, you will also help support the growth of club-level and national motorsport in New Zealand.

Additionally, forty-eight garages will be constructed in four blocks of twelve, which can be subleased to competitors for on-site car storage. Planning permission has already been granted, and the project is currently finalising a lease with the Western Bay of Plenty District Council before construction can begin. The circuit will not require any public funding; however, there are opportunities for investment and involvement..

Q. Tony Roberts replied to a few questions regarding the development of Thunder Ridge Motorsport Park, now that there had been an opportunity to consult interested groups and upgrade some of the specifications previously disclosed in press releases.

A: We have taken the suggestion on board and have enlarged the garages to 6m x 12m, giving 72 square metres, with a high stud height of 4m. This is then a four-car storage room. With the extra width, we can now have a roller door and a personal door in the front of the garages. People asked about staying overnight and bathroom facilities, so we have come up with a package that includes a shower, toilet and hand basin. When people come up with good ideas, we adopt them. The garages are going to appeal to a variety of people for storage, workshop, or even as an investment to be hired out. One thing I have noticed is that everything I did at Hampton Downs in the way of industrial units, apartments or lifestyle blocks has trebled in value, and I see no reason that these garages won't do the same.

Q: As the venue will be administered by a Trust, will you be calling for

nominations for trust members?

A: We are working through the not-for-profit Charitable Trust structure now and will have the three of us, plus another two Trustees. We already have the acceptance of the two trustees. It will not be a club structure, as we want long-term sustainability, with people who have the same goals as us.

Q: Do you envisage the formation of a motorsport club associated with the track? I'm asking this particularly from the angle of where you will get volunteers, marshals, etc.

A: Thunder Ridge will spend a million dollars on technology, such as first response vehicles, fire response vehicles, closed-circuit TV and an ambulance. We will also have paid marshalls around the circuit, and this is a possible role for keen local motorsport enthusiasts. We want this to be a user-friendly circuit, so every racer is a customer who we want to have a great time. We want the father and son racers to be able to build a car together and go racing.

Q: As the leases are transferable, how would that be administered?

A: Yes, the leases are transferable, and this will be handled by the Thunder Ridge administration.

Q: A big plus is no corporate body fees. Will that be the case with all garages

A: Yes, all garages. We want the garages not to have any hidden costs, so electricity is one cost that will have to be charged individually, to be fair to all owners, but no body corporate fees.

Q: Will there be an opportunity for commercial entities to establish themselves at, and in the surrounding area of the circuit inside the 70hec, as they have done at Highlands Motorsport Park, for example?

A: This may be possible, and we are speaking to the Western Bay of Plenty District Council about this, as it is not in other parts of TECT Park. It is possible that Thunder Ridge will build more buildings and lease them to customers.

Q: Do you expect any restrictions (noise, traffic) from local residents, and how will future use be controlled?

A: TECT Park has been set up as a major 1650-hectare park that has a huge range of activities. The motorsport section alone is over 350 hectares. Check out TECT Park on the net and see what activities are there.

There are no noise restrictions, no residents, excellent roading around the Park and a good entrance off the state highway. The Park is future-proofed as Council-owned in the middle of forestry land.

Q Will there be clubrooms or a café?

A: Our aim is to have a large Café with plenty of seating, so that drivers and friends can socialise together between races. There are several circuits in New Zealand that have this feature, and they are very enjoyable to be at.

SALE OF 48 LEASED GARAGES

Thunder Ridge garages for sale.

Thunder Ridge Motorsport Park has announced the sale of forty-eight, 72sqm garages with four-meter-high studs for purchase by way of a 105-year lease. The leases are said to come with free circuit test days, practice days, or MotoTT for the duration of the lease. The cost per garage is $250K plus GST.

www.thunderridge.co.nz/opportunities

SECURE YOUR GARAGE AT
THUNDER RIDGE MOTORSPORT PARK

Thunder Ridge Motorsport Park is offering 72m² private garages (12m x 6m, 4m stud height) within a secure compound by the pits. Perfect for storage, maintenance, or investment.

FEATURES:
- Powered 4m roller door, water & air supply
- LED lighting, EPS fire-resistant construction
- Option to install a hoist

BENEFITS:
- Free track access to Thunder Ridge Test Days, Practice Days & Moto TT events
- Advertising rights on the pit wall
- No hidden fees – maintenance included
- Lease resale
- option anytime

A $250k investment projected to grow to $2.5m over the 105-year land lease.

THUNDER RIDGE
MOTORSPORT PARK

Visit **www.thunderridge.co.nz** to secure your garage

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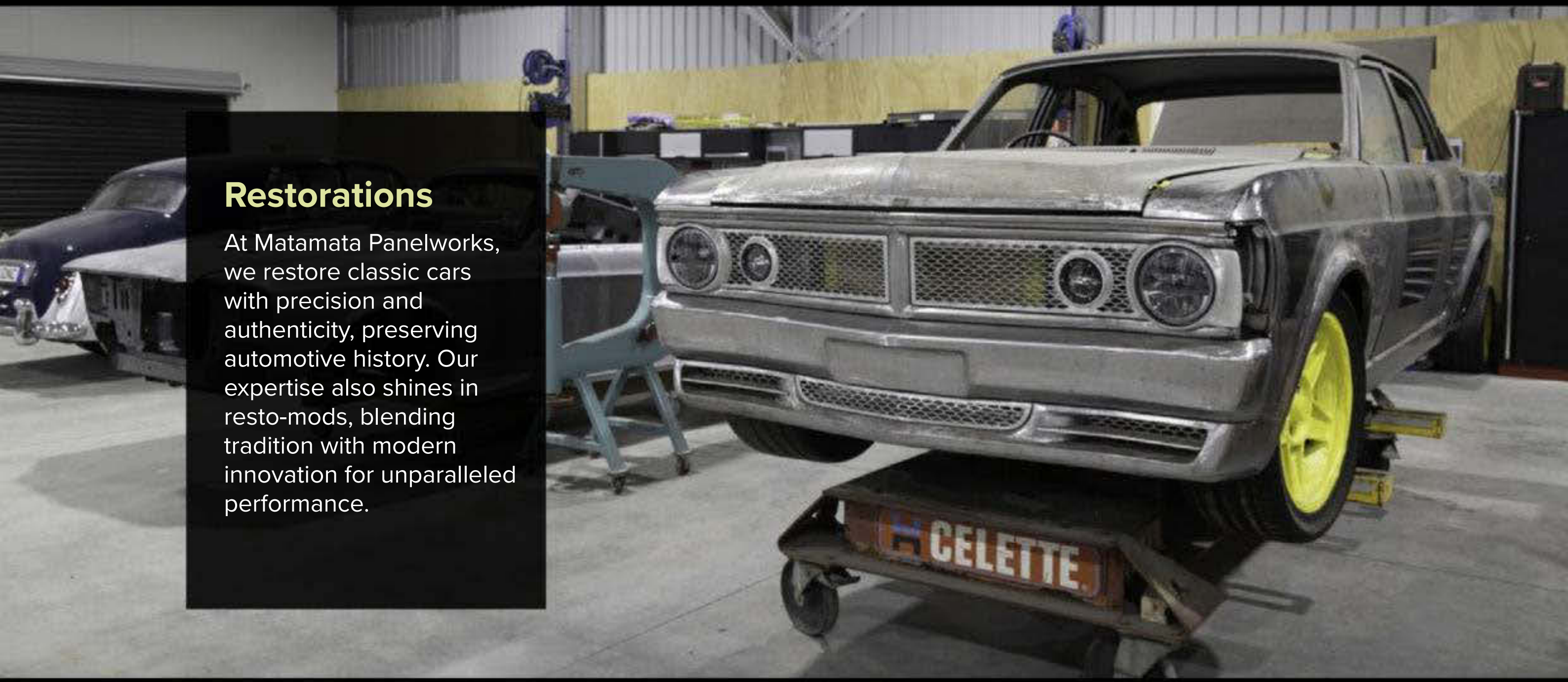

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At Matamata Panelworks, we restore classic cars with precision and authenticity, preserving automotive history. Our expertise also shines in resto-mods, blending tradition with modern innovation for unparalleled performance.

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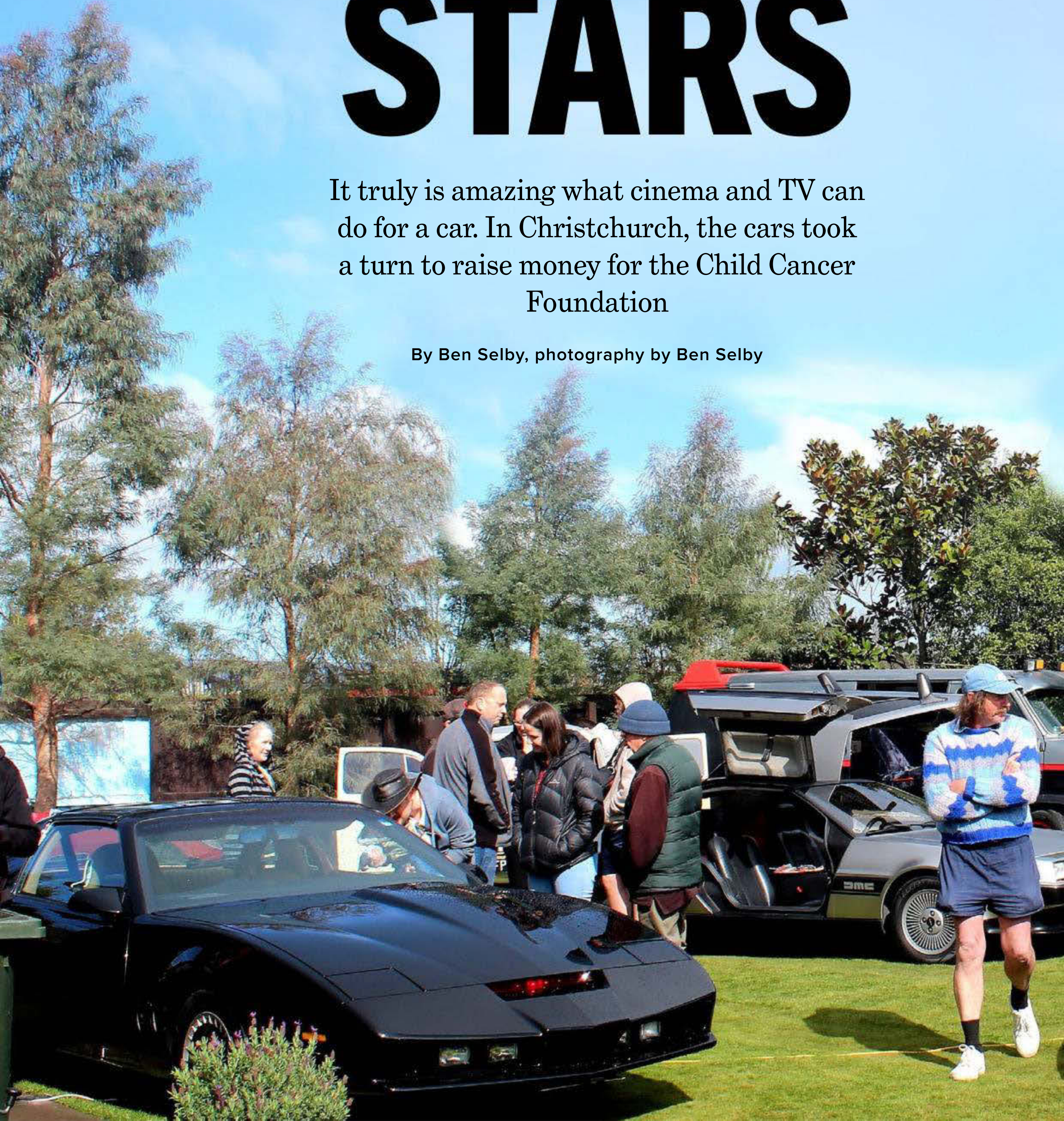
THE CARS ARE THE STARS

It truly is amazing what cinema and TV can do for a car. In Christchurch, the cars took a turn to raise money for the Child Cancer Foundation

By Ben Selby, photography by Ben Selby



Sure, vehicles have featured on celluloid for as long as people have been making movies, but what is more unique, is when a car generates just as much, if not more, fan mail and awe over its flesh and blood co-stars.

ICONIC CARS GATHER

For many, the most iconic era of cars from film and TV was the '70s and '80s. During this period, people sat glued to their screens ready for the next episode of shows like *Knight Rider*; *The Dukes of Hazzard*; *The A-Team*; *Starsky & Hutch*; *Magnum, PI*; *Miami Vice*; and *Scooby-Doo*, or headed to the local picture theatre and caught flicks like *Back to the Future*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *The Love Bug*, *The Blues Brothers*, or *Smokey and the Bandit*.

Seeing the vehicular stars of these pop culture TV and movie favourites is often few and far between, but for an afternoon in Rolleston, fans were able to attend a gathering of some of the most iconic cars from film and television in one place, and all for a good cause.

KITT'S KEEPER

The event was dreamed up by Scott Harvey, the proud owner of one of three 'KITT' talking Pontiac Trans Ams from the classic '80s sci-fi TV show *Knight Rider*, present on the day.

According to Scott, such a gathering has never been done locally before.

"I don't believe an event like this has been done before, at least not at this scale with a whole bunch of the most iconic and recognisable TV and movie favourites lining up," says Scott. "I knew of several star-car owners, and I was aware of an appetite to one day make something happen."

THE KNIGHTS FOR CHILD CANCER

The original idea was for a small gathering, a couple of cars and a private '80s-themed party for friends and family, inviting people to come along, but it soon grew in a big way.

"It quickly grew legs and now it has become this whole 'thing' which is amazing," says Scott. "Fully aware of the attention my KITT car attracted, I figured, if successful, pulling a stack of these star-cars together could cause quite the stir, and if so, what a great opportunity to raise some cash and awareness for Child Cancer New Zealand," says Scott.

The Child Cancer Foundation of New Zealand was the obvious choice for Scott as the recipient of the proceeds of the event.

"Myself and my fellow Knights of New Zealand [owners of New Zealand–based KITT Trans Am re-creations] and I have always chosen to support Child Cancer New Zealand since they receive no direct support from the government. They need to raise some $6.5M per year to keep on providing the support they do. With on average three kids being

Child cancer foundation
Knight Rider

Knight Rider

4TE4M
A-TEAM FOOL!
1978 GMC Rally STX

diagnosed every week in New Zealand, support from such events and Kiwis' generosity is much needed," he says.

GETTING IN CHARACTER

Despite the onset of wet weather blanketing the Rolleston venue, the turnout of TV and movie car heroes was nothing short of brilliant. Parked in Scott's backyard sat a bright red Ford Gran Torino with a white stripe down the side, made famous as the ride of choice for Detective David Starsky in *Starsky & Hutch*. In front of this sat a Dodge Monaco in Mount Prospect Police livery like the 'Bluesmobile' in the iconic musical comedy *The Blues Brothers*.

Then you had the 'Mystery Machine' van from *Scooby-Doo*; a Pontiac Trans Am from *Smokey and the Bandit II*; the GMC Rally STX van used by those 'soldiers of fortune' in *The A-Team*; an amazing recreation of Herbie, the Volkswagen Beetle with a heart from *The Love Bug*; and Ferris Bueller's choice for his day off in the form of the actual Ferrari 250GT California Spyder replica from the film of the same name.

"GREAT SCOTT!"

You also had a DeLorean DMC-12 made famous by the time-travelling exploits of Doc Brown and Marty McFly in *Back to the Future*, owned by our very own country music artist and *New Zealand Classic Car* contributor Miranda Easten, and last to arrive once the weather started to clear was 'General Lee' himself, the bright orange 1969/'70 Dodge Charger from *The Dukes of Hazzard*, complete with the iconic '01' and Confederate flag.

THE SHOWS GO ON

As people stood in awe and wonderment in the presence of such famous machinery, playing through a Bluetooth speaker were audio clips from TV shows and movies they featured in. Every five minutes, we heard excerpts like BA Baracus from *The A-Team* (Mr T) saying he would "take his fist and put his initials on our brain" or the sound of Waylon Jennings signalling the arrival of Bo and Luke Duke 'yee-hawing' their way through Hazzard County with Sheriff Roscoe P Coltrane in hot pursuit. This only added to the masses of nostalgia, which was already pretty evident.

The three KITT (Knight Industries Two Thousand) Pontiac Trans Ams were happy to 'chat' with fans and encourage them to enjoy the sausage sizzle and donate to the Child Cancer Foundation New Zealand – though fans of the show would notice that one KITT was masquerading as KITT's evil twin and arch nemesis KARR.

A PASSION FOR MOVIE-THEMED CARS

Scott's love of *Knight Rider* is no secret, as it has led him to create an incredibly accurate recreation of one of prime time's most celebrated automotive heroes.

"KITT was my childhood dream car, and Michael Knight was my hero. In 1984, when I was 7 years old, this futuristic black Trans Am just blew my mind, as did everything else about *Knight Rider*, the show. KITT spoke and drove on its own, jumped over buildings and through train carriages. It was magic," says Scott.

Scott's KITT started as a 1986 Trans Am with a 350ci V8, which he purchased in 2018.

"It was in much need of repair, and the only *Knight Rider* part it had on it was the nose cone. I slaved away for the next two years with early mornings and late nights, turning my old TA into KITT, my dream car."

MEETING THE HOFF

This dedication even led to a meeting in 2023 with Michael Knight himself when star David 'The Hoff' Hasselhoff was in New Zealand filming the Discovery series *Hoff Roading* with Rhys Darby.

"I couldn't believe I could meet David Hasselhoff himself, in the flesh, at my house with my KITT replica. This is the guy whose posters I had plastered all over my wall as a kid, the hero behind the car. He even drove it," says Scott.

FANS DONATED

With the sun peeking through the clouds and more people lining up to see their childhood screen heroes, this gathering proves it's not only the cars, but this era of pop culture, which resonates so strongly with so many.

"Petrolheads will each have a different motivation or attachment to a particular era. For some, it will be about the cars, others the memory of simpler times and no doubt many will argue this was Hollywood's peak for making movies and TV series with great stories and awesome cars," says Scott.

Well, after seeing first-hand just how popular this gathering of TV and movie car icons was, those glory days of automotive cinema and television will be etched in the minds of generations, young and old, for years to come. ■

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CHINE

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Price On

ROAD USER CHARGES FOR CLASSIC VEHICLES

By Greg Price

Or, ‘It wasn’t broken, so don’t try to fix it!’

When I first started writing for *New Zealand Classic Car* back in 1995, we were in the middle of the unleaded petrol fiasco

Many of you will remember that it had catastrophic consequences for many classic cars and motorcycles that were never designed to run on unleaded petrol. The whole debacle was made worse by the initial new unleaded petrol being something like 58 per cent toluene (an additive to boost the octane rating), which also caused the rapid deterioration of rubber parts, which in turn caused vehicle fires, as petrol leaked onto hot manifolds.

WE HAVE THE STATS!

At the time, statistics were trotted out that indicated petrol fires were no greater in number once the dreaded unleaded was foisted upon us than before, but knowing what I know now, we were simply hoodwinked by vested interests to limit liability.

Our then Transport Minister hardly knew what day it was at the time, and it made for entertaining television viewing. In one television programme I was involved with, I suggested to the producer that it was a bit unfair for them to have used the worst of the clips involving the faltering minister, but I was amused when told, “They were actually the best!” Interestingly too, was the fact that many of the petrol company financial settlements were ‘gagged’!

My own experience at the time was not with the unleaded, but with water! Our Cadillac got about 12 gallons of water in one fill. To my surprise, the Oil Company’s representative’s response was, “How much do you want?”

Caught off guard, I simply asked for another tank full (26 gallons) of proper petrol!

CNG CURE-ALL

Of course, we’d also endured the introduction of compressed natural gas (CNG) in 1979, and it was the then government’s intention to have 150,000 cars (approximately 10 per cent of the fleet) converted by 1985! That too had unfortunate consequences for many Australian-made Fords and Holdens, et al., with some engine bearings not compatible with the ‘dry’ fuel. In addition, many cars did not have room for the CNG tanks, as my cartoon at the time depicted! They couldn’t say I didn’t give it serious consideration!

HIDDEN PITFALLS

As is often the case, with any ‘good news’ often comes ‘the bad news’. I’m referring to the recent ‘win’ if you like, with the current Transport Minister announcing that from 1 September 2025, 40-year-old (plus) vehicles now only require a Warrant of Fitness (WoF) once every twelve months, rather than six-monthly. The reason given was that these vehicles (We’ll call them ‘Classics’) are generally well-maintained, and do not cover much mileage between WoFs, and more importantly, do not figure significantly in accident statistics. Which was a statistic I used when applying to NZTA (successfully) for exemptions for my window stickers!

CURRENT COSTS AND RUCS

Currently (as at mid 2024), we pay taxes on our petrol (including GST on top of the taxes!) in the order of $1.20 per litre. Unfortunately, the transport minister thinks it is only about $0.70! He officially announced the changes in August of this year. He stated that the petrol tax is on the way out, to be replaced by electronic road user charges, or RUCs, for everyone. Everyone? I don’t think so, minister!

He said that drivers of all light vehicles – petrol, hybrid, diesel and electric – will now pay for road use based on distance travelled and vehicle weight, instead of an extra charge at the pump.

As of now, Road User Charges (RUCs) only apply to vehicles not powered wholly by petrol, and all vehicles weighing more than 3.5 tonnes. When asked if this would ‘bring the price of petrol down, he was unclear. Which means, in essence, that the price will not come down! (Mark my words!)

THE LEGISLATIVE PLANS INCLUDE:

- Removing the requirement to carry or display RUC licences, allowing for digital records instead
- *Enabling the use of a broader range of electronic RUC devices, including those already built into many modern vehicles* [my emphasis]
- Supporting flexible payment models such as post-pay and monthly billing
- Separating NZTA’s roles as both RUC regulator and retailer to foster fairer competition
- Allowing bundling of other road charges like tolls and time-of-use pricing into a single, easy payment.

The minister is seemingly going to rely on private enterprise to monitor the system and collect the payments. Really? Basically, instead of having to keep track of your odometer readings and paying as you go for kilometre credits, a device will do that work automatically. (eRoad?)

"User-charging is a fair, proven way to fund infrastructure. Electronic Road User Charges (eRUCs) will make it easier to apply that principle consistently across all vehicles, whether petrol, diesel, electric or hybrid, as our transport system evolves."

However, there are still a lot of questions around the costs of implementing eRUCs for everyone. Would all cars be fitted with new devices, or would some kind of self-monitoring system be in place for those with older vehicles?

MONITORING CLASSICS

Let me state this up front. There will be no retrofitting of any electrical gadgetry to any of my classic cars or motorcycles! They are not needed in older vehicles. If you don't use your car, then you don't buy petrol – simple!

Unless they intend to change the rules, it is not currently a requirement to have a working odometer in your car! Thus, the current petrol tax is the best method of taxing a vehicle owner – except for those pesky hybrids!

WHAT DOES THE eRUC TECHNOLOGY MEAN FOR YOUR PRIVACY?

There's been a fair bit of talk doing the rounds on social media about the idea of electronic records for vehicle travel and worries about the government tracking people. (Except, I guess, from BMW owners who, for the past 20 years, have enjoyed remote disabling/tracking of their cars in the event it was stolen!)

Minister Bishop confirmed that privacy protections would remain a concern in developing the new systems (yeah, right!).

Enough of that already! I have had experience with some modern cars that have computers in them that have caused me no end of trouble. One of my modern vehicles has an on-board computer accessed by this secret little plug under the dashboard.

There is a connecting cable available via which you can access that computer and read/check any warning codes. (Some imports have had their recorded mileages altered before getting that little stickler that reads that the mileage is correct!) You can also disable them via this method!

If it were a diesel, I could alter the odometer reading, but NZTA latched on to this early on, and if your mileage drops markedly, they simply charge you based on their estimate of what you probably traversed, irrespective of whether or not you took the vehicle off the road for repairs!

The onus is on the vehicle owner to prove that there was a legitimate reason for the drop in mileage covered. I can see that being a significant problem if older cars are so retrofitted!

Given there is already an exception in place for WoFs, surely common sense would dictate that rolling over this WoF exception to classic vehicles, to include RUCs, would be the most sensible option?

MISSING THE POINT

The original object of the whole RUC change was to capture those Hybrids which use batteries rather than petrol, and weigh much more than your average car, and thus do more damage to the roads.

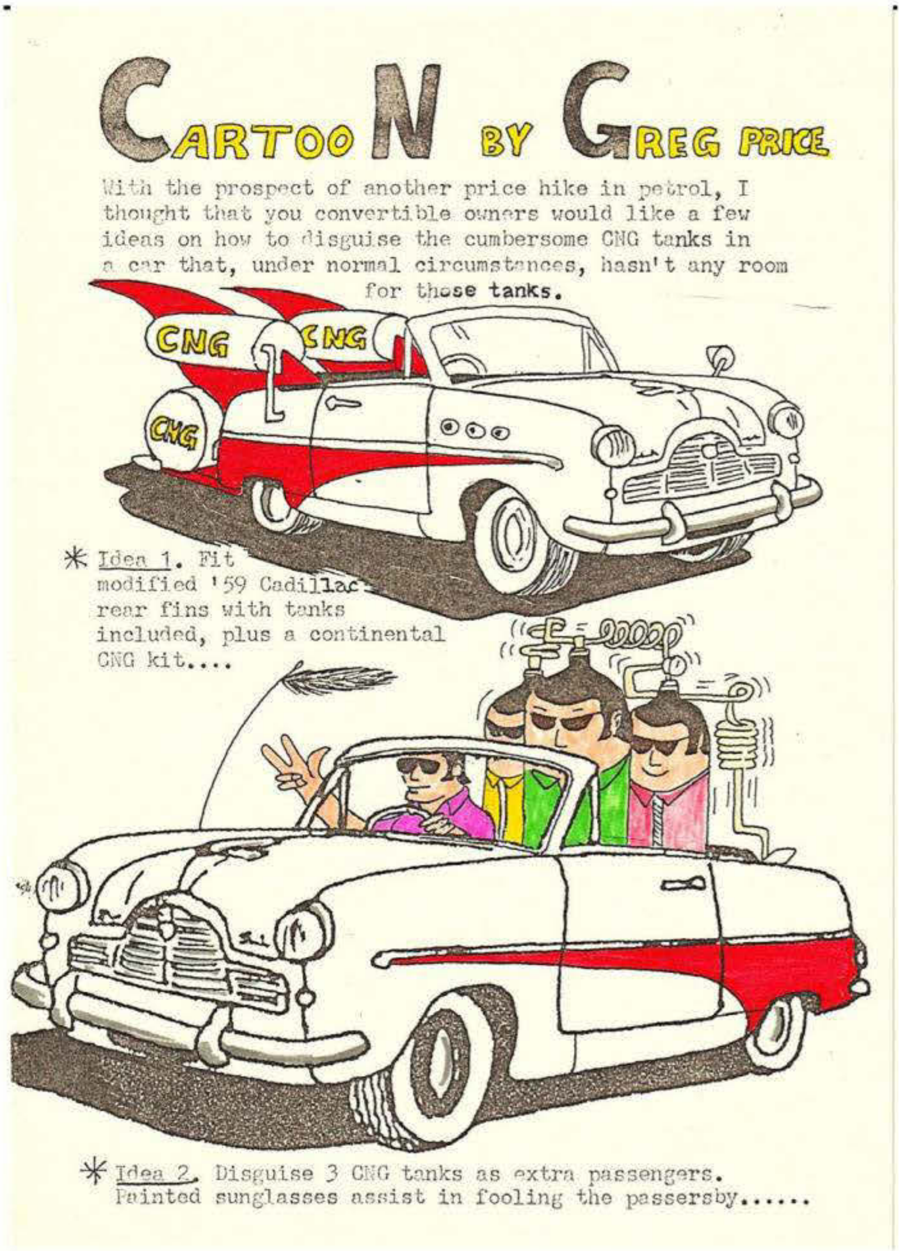
So why then punish the classic vehicle owners who hardly ever venture out to the extent that modern vehicles do? Or, is this a ploy to capture those classic American cruisers that are very heavy, or is it really to introduce spyware to all vehicles for tracking purposes? Who would know? Fortunately, there is some time left for common sense to prevail.

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

But seriously, where can I fit electronic gadgetry? There isn't any room left! Certainly, there's none on my pedal car?

There's an old saying, "If it ain't broke, it don't need fixing!"

Crank off a letter to the transport minister now! (And it will simply be forwarded to the NZTA for the preparation of a draft response for the minister to sign – yes, I know how the system works, but if he gets enough letters, he might just do something?) ■



With the prospect of another price hike in petrol, I thought that you convertible owners would like a few ideas on how to disguise the cumbersome CNG tanks in a car that, under normal circumstances, hasn't any room for those tanks.

* Idea 1. Fit modified '59 Cadillac rear fins with tanks included, plus a continental CNG kit....

* Idea 2. Disguise 3 CNG tanks as extra passengers. Painted sunglasses assist in fooling the passersby......

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FROM BARE METAL TO SHOWROOM SHINE

THE PPG WAY WITH CAR COLORS OF NORTH SHORE

Photography by Real Rides

When it comes to achieving a flawless finish, it's not just about the colour you see—it's about the science, precision, and protection behind every layer. At Car Colors of North Shore, in partnership with PPG, the refinishing process is an art form that balances old-school craftsmanship with cutting-edge coatings technology.

Here's a look at the meticulous process that transforms a vehicle from raw metal into a head-turning showpiece.

Step 1: Respecting the Metal

The journey begins with media blasting—but only on one side of the metal. The opposite side is mechanically stripped. Why? Because blasting both sides can compromise the integrity of the panels. This method preserves strength while still removing paint, rust, and contaminants.

Step 2: Metal Treatment with PPG Deoxidine

With the body stripped back, every metal surface undergoes treatment with PPG Deoxidine. This creates a thin phosphoric coating that removes flash rust and chemically cleans the surface. It's the first—and critical—layer of corrosion prevention.

Step 3: Epoxy Protection with PPG DP616 Epoxythane

Next comes PPG DP616 Epoxythane, a two-pack adhesion-promoting epoxy urethane primer. Applied to all bare metal, DP616 locks down corrosion protection and ensures outstanding adhesion for the layers to follow. Its excellent bond to steel makes it the foundation of long-term durability.

Step 4: Body Work and Recoating

With the surface protected, the cutting, welding, and bodyfilling can begin. Any bare metal revealed during this stage is immediately recoated with DP616. Once the structural work is complete, the whole vehicle is recoated again, reinforcing maximum protection.

Step 5: Building the Surface with PPG DP618 Primabuild

The next step is a wet-on-wet application of PPG DP618 Primabuild, providing the high build necessary for block sanding. Through successive rounds of sanding and recoating, every contour is perfected until the body panels are straight and smooth.

Step 6: Fine-Tuning with PPG DP602 Primaprime

To refine the surface even further, PPG DP602 Primaprime is applied. This final priming stage allows for detailed DA sanding, exposing any subtle highs and lows before correction. The result: panels that are laser-straight and ready for colour.

Step 7: Colour-Ready with PPG DP625

Before topcoat, a final wet-on-wet layer of PPG DP625 is laid down. Grey-shaded to best match the topcoat colour, it fills fine sanding marks, ensures superior coverage, and provides the ideal surface for the colour coat to bond.

Step 8: Colour and Clear with PPG Deltron & DC516

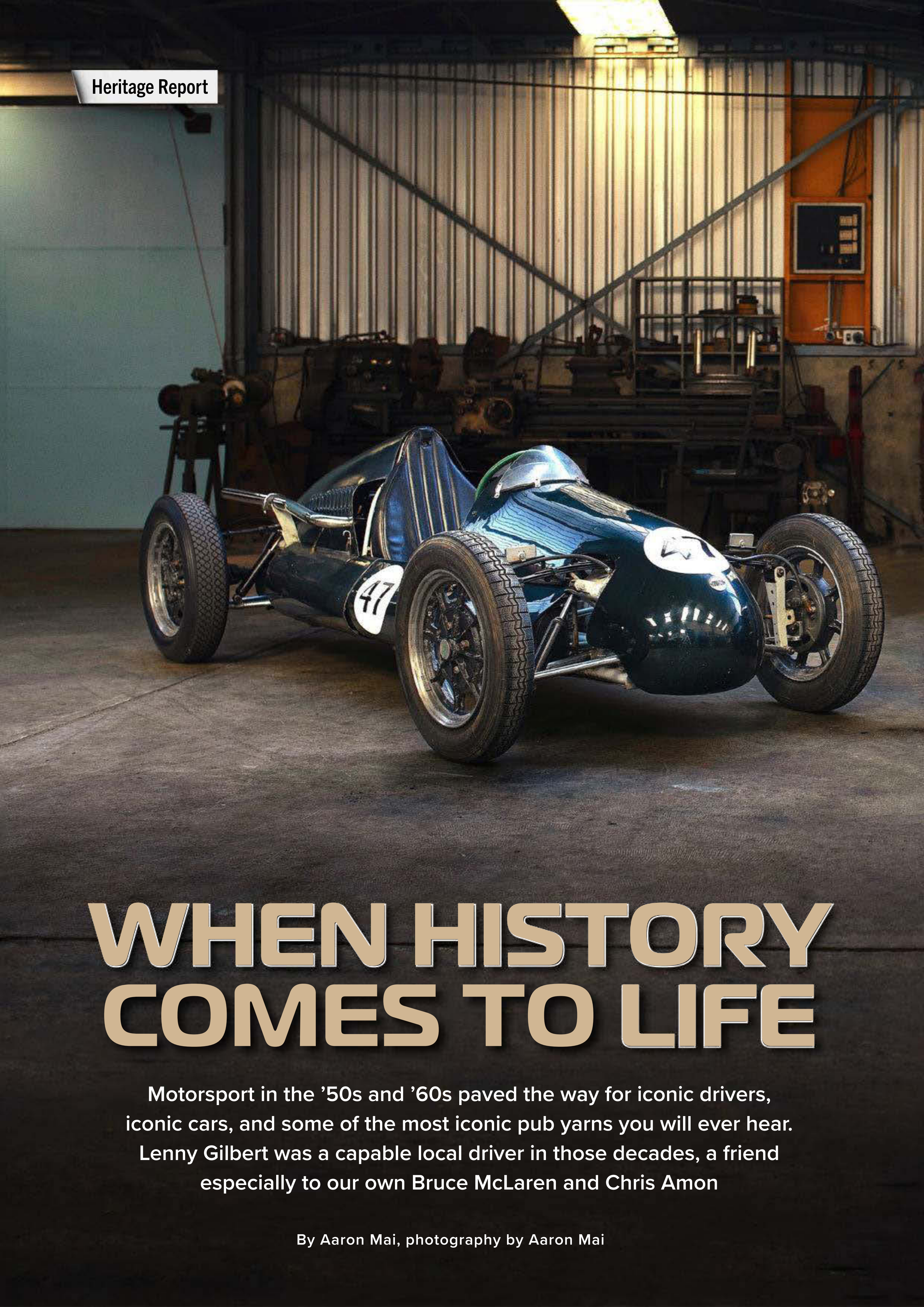
Now for the hero moment: topcoating with the PPG Deltron GRS system. Renowned for its depth and durability, Deltron lays down a vibrant, consistent finish. To lock it in, PPG DC516 Genclear—a high-performance 2K acrylic urethane clearcoat—is applied, delivering stunning gloss and long-lasting protection.

Step 9: The Finish Line

With the final clear laid down, it's time to step back, crack open a coldie, and admire the masterpiece as it bakes in the booth. What started as bare metal is now a showroom-ready finish, built to turn heads and stand the test of time.

At Car Colors of North Shore, every stage of this process is backed by PPG's advanced technology and decades of refinishing expertise. From corrosion protection to colour brilliance, the partnership ensures every project rolls out of the booth looking better than new.

Because at the end of the day, great paintwork isn't just about colour—it's about confidence.



WHEN HISTORY COMES TO LIFE

Motorsport in the '50s and '60s paved the way for iconic drivers, iconic cars, and some of the most iconic pub yarns you will ever hear. Lenny Gilbert was a capable local driver in those decades, a friend especially to our own Bruce McLaren and Chris Amon

By Aaron Mai, photography by Aaron Mai

Marques like Cooper and Maserati are stalwarts in motorsport history, yet, when you add names like 'McLaren' and 'Amon, that just makes them all the more special. Bruce and Chris are iconic names in New Zealand.

There is one other lesser-known person who was unwittingly woven into the fabric of these legends' early motorsport careers, that you probably never heard of. For Lenny Gilbert, history never looked like history as he was simply living through it. Ironically, he would find himself playing a small part in writing it.

KICKSTARTER

Lenny Gilbert's love affair with cars started when his brother Harry taught him to drive at an early age. After Lenny returned from service in the Second World War, he quickly realised that the Army had taught him absolutely nothing useful for civilian life other than how to drive.

After settling back home, Lenny received an invitation from a friend to spectate at the Ohakea Airfield races, where the driving itch came back, and this time it was going to need scratching. In the '50s, there was a strong 'run-what-you-brung' mentality in motorsport, which resonated with Lenny and one machine in particular – a wee Cooper 500 that was racing that day and caught his eye.

In 1952, the humble Cooper 500 was cutting-edge technology, perfectly conformed to the new 500cc racing rulebook established for what is now known as Formula 3. A chance

> "In 1952, the humble Cooper 500 was cutting-edge technology, perfectly conformed to the new 500cc racing rulebook"

Len Southward beside a Ford Model T. Photo National Library of NZ

encounter months later with the Cooper minus its engine saw Lenny purchase it for UK500 pounds. In true Lenny fashion, it wasn't long before an engine was fitted, and the Cooper was brought back to life while keeping the family and the farm running smoothly.

MOTORSPORT DRIVEN

It wasn't long before he was a regular competing in hill climbs and motor sport events around New Zealand. After qualifying for the NZ Grand Prix at Ardmore, Lenny rolled his Cooper in qualifying and attracted the attention of Stirling Moss.

In Stirling's words, 'I wanted to meet the chap who got the front-page photo when I won the race'.

Lenny happened to have a copy of the paper with the photo, so Stirling promptly signed the sump, exclaiming, 'It's the most valuable advertising space on any car because when it flips, the whole world gets to see it!'

The Cooper was now arguably famous thanks to Stirling; however, it was at the 1955 Muriwai Hillclimb that it would solidify its real claim to fame.

FUTURE CHAMPION FRONTS UP

It was at the end of the day, as the wee Cooper was being readied to leave, Len was chatting with a 17-year-old competitor and his father. The event was over, yet the road was still closed to the public, so Lenny offered a young Bruce McLaren the chance to go for a run up the course in a real race car.

This was the first time Bruce had ever driven a single-seater, and as he took off, the stopwatch was started, with Lenny curious to see what the unofficial time would end up being.

'He beat me by just over a second, I was p***ed off!' Lenny remarked. However, despite the crippling blow to Lenny's ego, this wasn't to be the last time Lenny and Bruce would cross paths on and off the racing circuits.

STEPPING UP

As 1960 rolled around, the front-engine cars were the recipe for success at the top level, and Lenny needed to update his race machinery to keep up. He sold his Cooper 500 to purchase a Cooper Bristol that he successfully campaigned for a few years, but, once again, he was on the hunt for his next race car. At that time, there was only one genuine Formula 1 car racing in New Zealand, the Maserati 250F.

Jack Brabham brought chassis No. 2509 to New Zealand, with a Cooper for the New Zealand International Grand Prix circuit. Jack's thinking was that he would race the fastest of the two, which ultimately

Maserati 250F of Chris Amon

saw the Cooper end up in the heat of competition. The Maserati was sold to Gavin Quirk.

Quirk struggled with the car over the course of a season and then decided he wanted rid of it after what seemed like constant arguments with power poles and concrete kerbs. Lenny heard the 250F was on the market, but found it completely stripped and stored in 15 boxes.

MAKE ME AN OFFER

After some inspecting of the boxes and a spot of good-old bartering, the chassis, a pile of wheels and the boxes of assorted pieces arrived back at Lenny's restaurant he now owned. He spent the winter of 1960 using an Italian dictionary and his broken Italian learned in the war to assemble the Maserati piece by piece. The 250F was finished off in a metallic dark green with a white stripe down the middle.

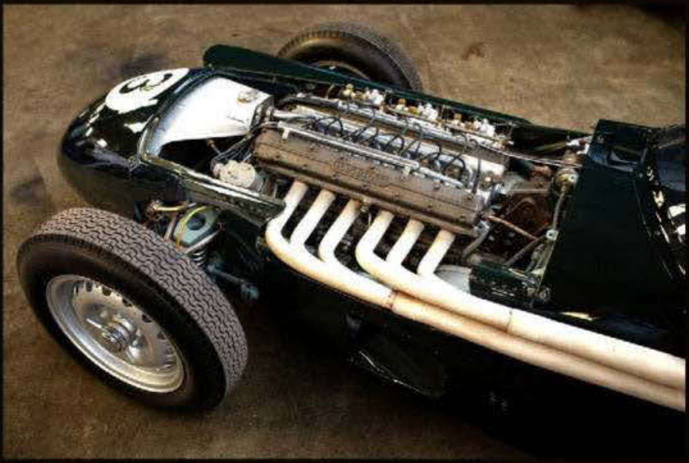
Its first outing came at Renwick in Blenheim, and while leading on the last lap, a spin saw Lenny finish in 2nd place overall with no damage. It had been a good day's racing! As Lenny got used to the step-up in power and weight from the Bristol to the 250F, it was time for the real thing – the 1961 Grand Prix at Ardmore.

FACING THE INTERNATIONALS

By this time, every international team with the exception of Ferrari was represented on the grid with Jack Brabham, Stirling Moss, Jim Clark, John Surtees, Graham Hill and Dan Gurney, as well as New Zealand's finest, including Lenny in his Maserati. A fine start and just as everyone was settling in lap-9, it would go pear-shaped for the Hamiltonian. The rear wheels struck a patch of dust blown onto the track, causing the revs to flash up to 8000rpm, sending the piston and conrod out of the block. Lenny spent the remainder of the race spectating while Jack Brabham beat Bruce McLaren by just 1.7 seconds to the chequered flag.

REPAIRING THE DAMAGE

Despite the mechanical drama, it would be only 9 days later, after some



Len Gilbert - A handy mechanic and driver

Len Gilbert (Centre) with Bruce McLaren in his Cooper

late nights welding up the hole in the block, that the Maserati was ready to go again. One further season of racing all over New Zealand at Wigram, Levin, and Ardmore saw Lenny finish a very satisfying 5th in the 1961 NZ driver's championship.

By now, he had decided that the days of the front-engine race cars were over, and it was time for the Maserati to find a new home. Waimate was Lenny's final international event as a driver, and as he farewelled the international star-studded lineup who had become like a family, and headed back to Hamilton to hang up the helmet.

BULLS FARMER IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

With the Maserati on the market, it wasn't long before a Manawatu car salesman came knocking on behalf of a young driver who farmed at Bulls by the name of Chris Amon. The young Chris Amon wasn't exactly flush with cash; however, after trading his Cooper and some folding, he was the proud new owner of Lenny's Maserati. Lenny always believed that the reason Chris was so good in 'hairy-legged cars' was because he cut his teeth on the larger-than-life Maserati 250F.

HELLO, OLD FRIEND

After selling the Maserati, Lenny gave motorsport a rest and fostered a new love and family interest in waterskiing. It seemed that the motorsport bug was now a thing of the past; however, a random letter in the post in late 1962 would turn that on its head. The letter was from Bruce McLaren in England. Bruce asked Lenny to come along for the 1963 season as his mechanic for the Tasman Series, and the best part was that he would be paid £20 a week for it.

The chance encounter in Muriwai had actually turned out to be the start of a long-lasting friendship, the motorsport bug was biting again, and Lenny once again was back on the road from Pukekohe to Teretonga and then off to Australia 'spannering' on Bruce's car for the 1964 season as well.

With long weeks on the road, any time at home with the family was valuable, however, each summer between races Lenny and his family played host to the international stars of the NZ International Grand Prix Circuit. Jackie Stewart, Phill Hill, Jim Clark, Bruce McLaren and others would camp on Lenny's back lawn and spend their time between races waterskiing on Lake Karapiro followed by BBQ dinners.

Life was good, and restful weekend laughs were plentiful. New Zealand was very much the summer playground for the world's best drivers. On one occasion, Jim Clark and Frank Gardener decided to go for a bit of a 'hoon' up the lake in the ski boat while everyone else was enjoying some rest; however, after 30 minutes, they had failed to return. As a search party was dispatched, they were located towing another boat that had broken down.

Frank and Jim were very pleased with themselves, and the people whom they rescued were nothing short of speechless as to who had come to their aid. It was just another day in the life of a Grand Prix driver.

BOND OF FRIENDSHIP

As Bruce's career was skyrocketing, he had never forgotten that early kindness shown to him by Lenny and his loyalty as a friend and mechanic. The two got on very well and had formed a close bond

Len Gilbert in his Cooper Bristol (centre) at possibly, Waimate copy

> "He had never forgotten that early kindness shown to him by Lenny and his loyalty as a friend and mechanic"

Len Gilbert

Cooper 500 of Bruce McLaren

that was important on the long weekends of racing and late-night driving from one circuit to the next as the Grand Prix circus moved around the country.

It was the same for the international drivers who were considered family by this point; there were multiple occasions when Jim Clark would drop by for a cup of tea while the nosey neighbours peered over the fence, to see who was coming by to say hello.

For Lenny and his family, this was the norm, yet the novelty never wore off. It is unbelievable to think now that a multiple world champion would just drop in for a catch-up and a cuppa.

WRITING HISTORY

It isn't every day that an individual finds themselves rubbing shoulders professionally, let alone on a personal level, with iconic names in the world of motorsport. When you talked to Lenny about these adventures, he recalled them fondly, but while many would listen with their jaws sitting on the floor, for Lenny, it was just 'what they did back then'. While the glory days of the Tasman Series and Formula One stars holidaying in New Zealand are long gone, the pub yarns and tangible pieces of that history can still be found here today.

The Cooper 500 and Maserati 250F, once owned and campaigned by Lenny, have never been brought together until now.

These two stunners are true time capsules offering a glimpse into the glory days, still largely in the same condition and form as when they were raced in period. The Cooper belongs to the Rush family and is part of the Rush Collection. Meanwhile, the Maserati has been owned by the Southward Museum Trust for several years and is currently on display in the museum located on the Kapiti Coast in Otaihanga.

These two cars played a part in the story of two of New Zealand's best motorsport drivers, and having them still here is something worth celebrating. It isn't all that often that one person could sit in a pub and tell the punters first-hand yarns of 'spannering' on Bruce McLaren's racing cars, going water skiing with Jim Clark and having Stirling Moss sign his crash photo in the newspaper.

I guess the real power play is getting to tell people that Bruce McLaren and Chris Amon drove your race cars because that is about as top-shelf as a pub yarn could ever get. History might never look like history when you are just living through it, but by gosh, it ages well for this lucky punter who got to relive it, seeing these two together in front of my camera lens.

Our thanks to John Bellamore (Manager), for allowing New Zealand Classic Car *to record these two great pieces of New Zealand motor racing history – Ed.* ■

TOYOTA'S FIRST RAV4

Classic inspiration

The original Toyota RAV4 made a cautious entry into the New Zealand market three decades ago, but there was a feeling then that the best was yet to come

By Donn Anderson

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, yet when it comes to looks, often the first incarnation of a model is the most harmonious and simply the best.

Uprated technology and improved equipment, what comes later in the form of styling retouches can merely be changed for change's sake. For example, look no further than an original Jaguar E-Type, Datsun 240Z, Range Rover or the first-generation BMW Mini R50 hatchback.

FIDDLING WITH AN ALREADY CLEAN DESIGN

From my time working in the motor industry, it became clear that facelifts were often the predominant reason for an owner to replace his car with a newer example. A matter of fiddling with an already clean design.

Thirty years ago, a new Toyota RAV4 was our transport for exploring the picturesque South Wairarapa Ngawi Peninsula, the southernmost tip of the North Island. In fact, we had two examples of an eye-catching compact four-wheel drive that was just being launched.

Today, the larger fifth-generation RAV4 is a top-selling new passenger model in New Zealand, clocking sales that Toyota could hardly imagine for the first-generation example back in 1995.

CLASSIC CULT STATUS

Years later, the first SXA10 series RAV4 is viewed as an affordable classic, yet it may be more significant than that. Initially seen as a fashion statement from Japan's top car maker, it had potential as a cult vehicle alongside classics like the Mini and Porsche 911. Influenced by the Suzuki Vitara and evoking the spirit of the Mazda MX5, it gained recognition in 1997 when *Automobile* magazine named it car of the year in the US. The RAV4 embodied a character that was rare in Japanese cars of that era. However, despite the accolades, it struggled to make a mark, failing to break into New Zealand's top-20 sales chart in 1995.

FROM NICHE TO MARKET LEADER

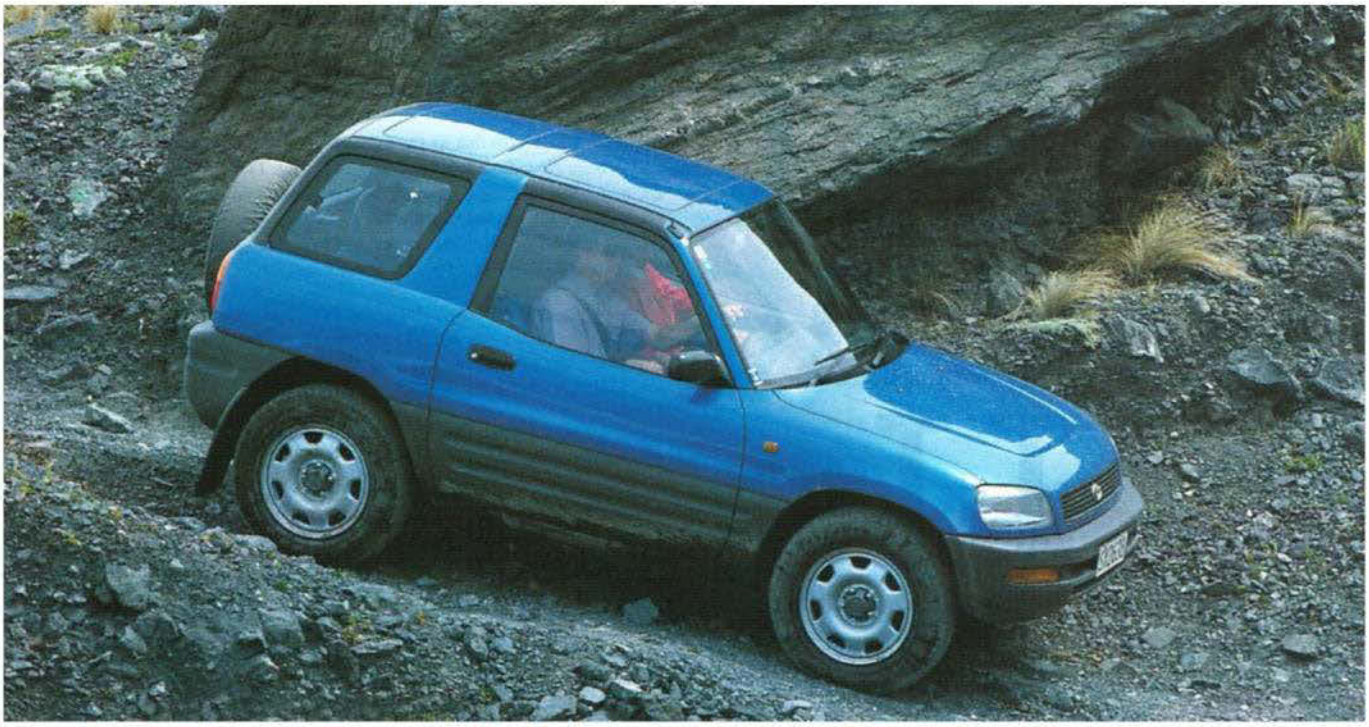
The market for this type of vehicle simply did not exist in New Zealand three decades ago. However, as subsequent models and upgrades kept coming, sales increased internationally. RAV4 output had topped 10 million units by 2020, the year this first-generation rendition ended production. In February 2025 the current RAV4 replaced Ford's F-150 as the top-selling car in the United States.

Yet from relatively small beginnings came the first-generation example that exudes personality from every curve of the body. It had something of a Tonka toy look, a short, stubby stance and a clean, if cheeky, shape. The model was an early contender in the compact crossover SUV class, and its name derived from the words 'Recreational Active Vehicle'.

Tipping the scales at 1175kg, the three-door measured 3705mm and, in answer to those who lamented the minimal interior space, was soon joined by a 4150mm five-door. A soft-top three-door and even an EV version were produced but never imported new into New Zealand.

From inception, the car's sales were hampered by a relatively high list price of $42,500 for the least costly five-speed manual – a solid $7500 more than a similarly equipped Vitara three-door. A fully loaded RAV4 auto cost a shade over $51K – a high ask in 1995 – and it still lacked alloy wheels, which Toyota deemed too expensive for our market.

The passage of time saw New Zealand–new examples joined by many Japanese used imports, distinguished by a 'J' badge on the tailgate. As local sales failed to reach expectations, in 1996, Toyota dropped the price to $39,995 for the three-door and $42,495 for the five-door.



A FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE PRETENDER?

Examples sold new in Australia were compliant with ADR standards and could be optioned with twin sunroofs ($1200), air conditioning ($2250), and an exterior package ($1300), which included a front nudge bar, underbody dual, rear step/protector bar, tower, and spare wheel cover. Early models lacked a driver's side airbag and anti-lock brakes, featuring a standard braking system with power-assisted 302mm front discs and 229mm rear drums.

At launch, there were questions about whether the RAV4 favoured style over practicality, yet it offered permanent four-wheel drive and a differential lock for rough conditions, despite not having a low-ratio transfer box. Most models featured 16-inch steel wheels with 215/70 tyres and a generous ground clearance.

The available four-speed automatic transmission, inherited from the Camry V6 and costing an extra $2500, included a lockup torque converter overdrive and dual-range electronic control. Power came from a transversely mounted 1998cc, 96kW four-cylinder engine, producing 180Nm at 4400rpm. The RAV4 engine had a single exhaust manifold with a catalytic converter, improving some hot-start aspects, but was not as responsive as the Corona engine.

NIPPY PERFORMER

At launch, the RAV4 excelled in power and torque within the small car class, featuring a strong power-to-weight ratio. Its engine speed-sensitive steering turns

2.7 times from lock to lock, providing a tight 10m turning circle, making it highly manoeuvrable in urban settings, despite heavy B-pillars affecting visibility. While early owners didn't find the absence of a low-ratio drive problematic, the rear seating limits load space. The cabin is tightly sealed, requiring a firm slam on the doors, but it offers handy stowage compartments and a wheel jack under the front seat. Anti-corrosion measures include galvannealed steel for major outer panels, and some models feature optional twin aluminium sunroofs. A slight gear whine is common and was present upon release.

A SOUTH WAIRARAPA ADVENTURE

Our baptism by fire at the introduction of the RAV4 was a day-long, 160km, anti-clockwise circuit from Martinborough south to Whangamōmona, with magnificent early views of the blue ocean providing a taste of what was to come. The road soon changes to loose metal, and at Te Kopi there's a camping site and a walk to the Pūtangirua rock pinnacles. At Ngawi, the view is so clear we can see 120km to the outline of the 2885m Mt Tapuaenuku, the highest part of the Kaikōura ranges in the South Island.

Eastward towards Black Rock, and the road narrows to barely one lane, which suits the RAV4 well. The seal colony near Cape Palliser is a worthwhile stopping point, many camouflaged by the grey rocks and basking in the sun, while others fight an unforgiving sea. They pay no attention to our presence.

From here on, there is no road marked on the map, and the poorly formed track is narrow, albeit reasonably well defined. The compact dimensions of the Toyota are an asset in this sort of territory, and we climb a huge slate hill that tumbles down into the sea like a massive glacier. We engaged the diff locks, and both RAV4s had no difficulty breasting the hill.

Apart from the distant company of a pair of fishermen in an all-wheel-drive utility, this is a peaceful place in one of the most remote parts of the North Island. A steepish climb up Te Rakauwhakamataku Point taxes the high gearing of the RAV4, and at one point, the drop into the ocean is somewhat daunting.

Navigating rough terrain before rejoining the gravel road, the RAV4's suspension handles potholes effectively. After assessing its performance on Wellington highways, we found it competent. Tyre squeal emerges early during highway driving, limiting cornering ambitions. The suspension's equal roll-centre heights reduce pitching, and a front T-shaped steel sub-frame enhances rigidity. While not a hot hatch, the Toyota accelerates to 100kph in 10.2 seconds, reaches a top speed of 177kph, and consumes 9.2 litres per 100km. However, our journey along the slow Cape Palliser route was much more relaxed.

Although there is a fair amount of engine noise intrusion at open road speed, cruising speeds on-road refinement is nevertheless good. When seeking out an elderly RAV4, don't be put off by the automatic versions that smooth out some of the harshness of the engine and are arguably even better in off-road situations.

Into the slow and rough stuff, first gear is higher than it should be, a factor absent from the auto versions with their wet multiple-disc slip-limiting mechanism that is in tandem with the mechanical centre diff. In the manual gearbox RAV4, the dilemma is repeated on slow, steep downhill ground. The lack of a low-ratio first gear means more reliance on brakes in situations where the driver does not always want to use the middle pedal. Expect more transmission whine than a Corolla or Corona, and the actual gear change from first to second can feel clunky.

SAND AND TWISTING LOOSE-SURFACE ROADS

A stop at White Rock on the east coast involves a bit of play in the sand before continuing north along a winding, metalled road to Tuturumuri through park-like scenery. During the journey back to Martinborough, we encountered a few cars but many sheep, which slowed us down.

The RAV4 impressed with its balance and power, offering a smooth drive despite some limited engine response at low revs. While parts of the route suit two-wheel-drive vehicles, the entire loop requires all-wheel drive. Some areas are on Māori-owned land, and public access is currently under review.

Our enthusiasm for the model led us to acquire a new three-door in 1995, which sparked conversations wherever it went. Its few shortcomings included no glovebox light, basic carpet, and a central locking system that only worked on the driver's door. To address its downtimes, we installed a New Zealand–designed Powerbeat battery for improved power management and added features like a stone deflector and an upgraded steering wheel. However, the RAV4's clean styling makes many dress-up parts seem unnecessary.

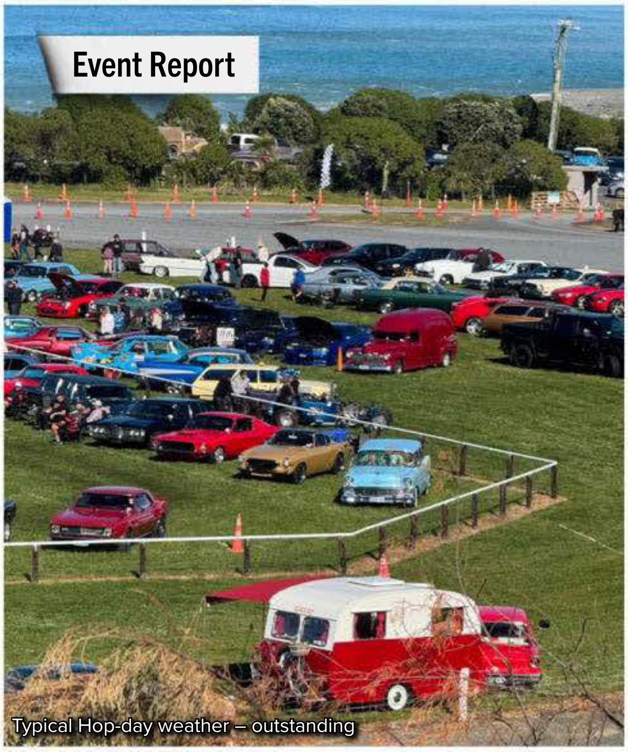
AGED WELL AND GOOD VALUE?

The nineties RAV4 still catches the eye, but is it marked for classic model status? Resale values suggest not, yet the prospects for this Toyota are warming, especially given the current minimal values. Many low-priced examples are always on offer, and the Trade Me site usually lists around 35 first-generation RAV4s, often exhibiting very high mileages.

A four-owner 1995 example used for fishing and beach work was offered recently for $1800. There are usually several around $2K, and the most expensive found was a 2000 model with 246,000km and a $6500 asking price. A majority are showing at least 200,000km, and several have covered more than 300,000km. Expect $3K as a typical price for a good example that has the prospect of being returned to its former glory.

Today's values reflect no difference in price between three-door and five-door but somehow it is the cute, shorter version that has the most character and is more likely to be more memorable and perhaps more collectable.

When the market perceives the original RAV4 to be a game-changer and recognises its competence, the cheerful Toyota may rightfully become something rather special. ■



Typical Hop-day weather – outstanding

Dedication

Great combo of classic caravan and Ford Falcon

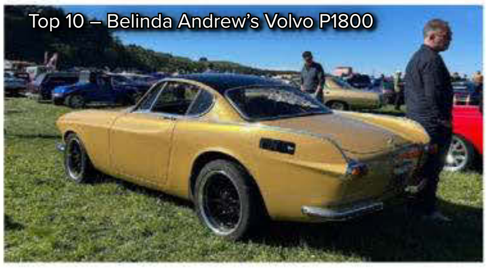
Brian and Sue Ford's '59

Geoff Andrew's '56 Chevrolet Nomad

NINS BIN
NINS BIN

Looking the part – 1955 Chevrolet 3100 pickup

Raymond and Darene Sandringham's '67 Ford Mustang



Top 10 – Belinda Andrew's Volvo P1800

CRAYFISH TO CHROME

ALL THE SIGHTS, SOUNDS, AND SMELLS OF KAIKOURA HOP 2025

By Jonathan Paape

For most Kiwis, Kaikōura's most iconic sight is the famous Nins Bin crayfish caravan. However, for over 2000 car enthusiasts, the town signifies something entirely different: the Kaikoura Hop

Each September, this four-day celebration signals the first hint of the car show season. Hop entrants come from all over New Zealand, with Saturday's convoys rolling in from as far south as Invercargill and as far north as Nelson for a petrol-soaked big day out.

ROCKIN' AND CRUISIN' ALL WEEKEND

The Hop is packed with action: day and night cruises, car shows, drive-in movies, shed tours, photo ops, and a Rock 'n' Roll dance. This year's theme was Las Vegas Rock 'n' Roll – an outstanding band, sequins everywhere, towering heels, hair piled high … and that was just the men.

By Sunday's farewell breakfast there were surprisingly few hangovers, but plenty of croaky voices from all the singing and sore feet from hours of dancing.

SHOW 'N' SHINE

The undisputed highlight is Saturday's Show 'n' Shine. Around 1000 registered cars gather at Kaikōura's South Bay racecourse, with hundreds more cruising in. Over 4000 spectators arrived to admire immaculate originals, lovingly restored classics, and wildly creative custom builds. Cameras click like automatic rifles as the showground pulses with energy.

Food trucks, live bands, and stalls selling American car memorabilia, vintage rock 'n' roll clothing, and local products keep the buzz alive.

Whether you're a dyed-in-the-wool car fanatic or just along for the ride, the Kaikoura Hop is a must-see weekend of chrome, culture, and petrol-fuelled fun. ■

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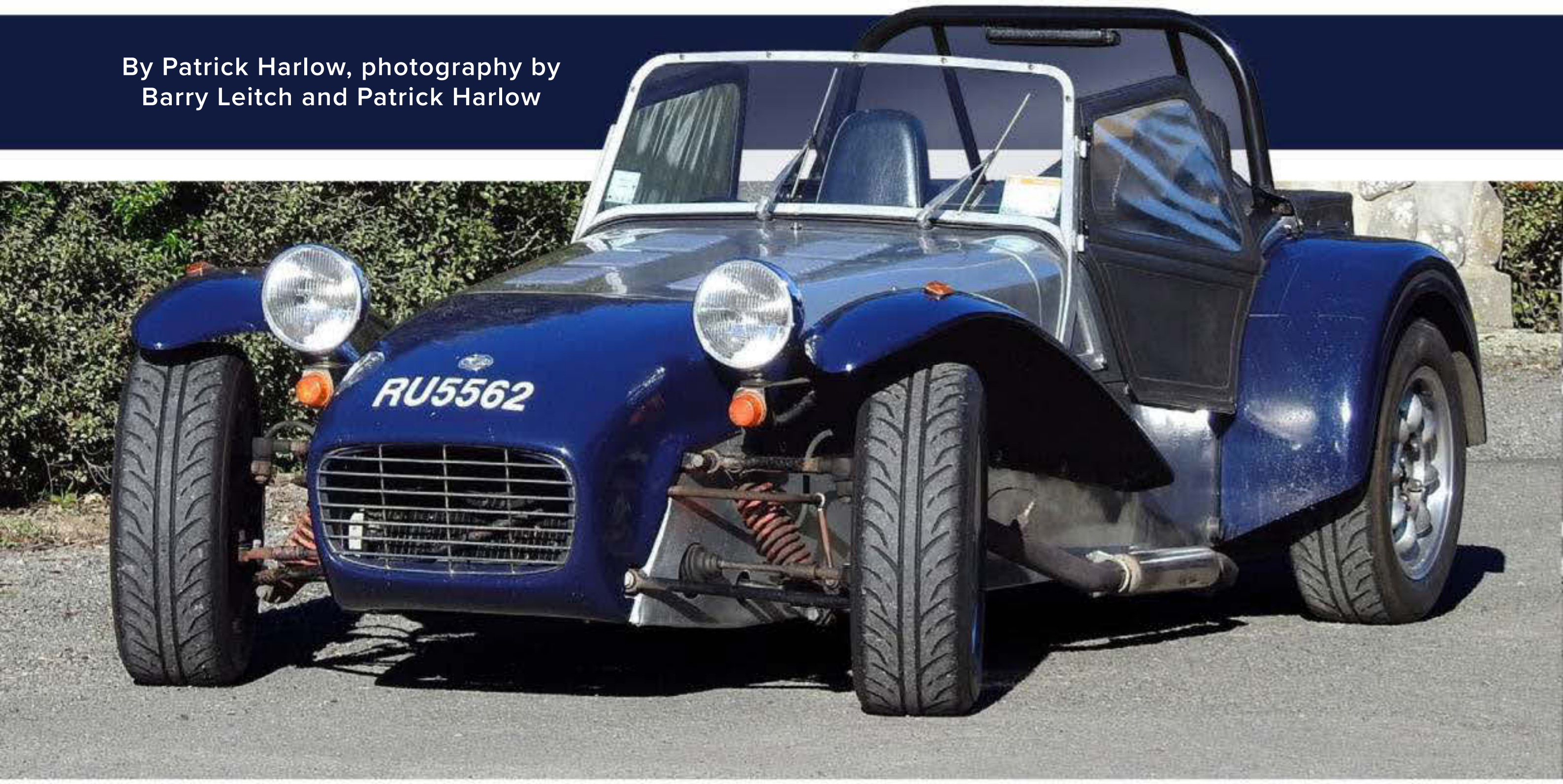
BARRY LEITCH

And The Leitch Super Sprint

In the deep south of the South Island, Barry Leitch is a well-known figure in automotive circles. When it comes to automobiles, there is not much that Barry has not tried

By Patrick Harlow, photography by Barry Leitch and Patrick Harlow



From replicas to complete restorations, Barry has done it all. What makes this story so interesting is that everything is self-taught. Barry trained as an electrician, spending most of his early career working as a sparky for the Makarewa Freezing Works in Invercargill.

PASSION FOR SPORTS CARS

The thing that pushed him from electrical power to petrol power was a love of sports cars. Back in the early '80s, Barry really wanted one but did not have the cash. Then one day, a friend drove around his place in a Series 3 Lotus 7.

After taking it for a drive, Barry was impressed with its agility and speed. In those days, Lotus 7s were selling for a similar price as a brand-new family car, still out of his price range. However, after a closer inspection of its simple tubular chassis, fibreglass clamshell mudguards and squarish nosecone, he decided that it would not be too difficult to build one from scratch in his garage.

A lot more measurements were taken, steel tube was purchased, and space was set aside in his garage for what would end up being a replica of his friend's car. The good thing was that apart from the Lotus chassis, every other part could be sourced from wrecking yards. An Escort rear end, Triumph Herald steering rack, switches and Smiths aftermarket gauges were added to the ever-growing parts collection.

121
PENRITE
DELLORTO
LEITCH

121
121
LEITCH

FIRST OF THE LINE

The building began in 1983 and was finished in 1984. Each bit of tube was carefully measured and brazed together using a gas torch. All the fibreglass components were carefully taken off his friend's car and used as the basis to construct moulds from which his own set of panels was eventually pulled. Barry's wife, Marguerite, helped with the fibreglass work and upholstery.

The resultant car soon became well known both on the streets of Invercargill and at Teretonga Park, New Zealand's oldest permanent racetrack and possibly the most southern racetrack in the world. Barry was having a lot of fun with the car.

SHOWTIME

In 1985, when the local Vintage Car Club wanted to put on a car show in the Old Centennial Hall in Invercargill, they approached Barry and asked him if he would be interested in displaying his car at the event. Being a nice guy and keen to help, he quickly agreed, expecting they

→

SUPER
LEITCH
SPRINT

The blue Leitch Super Sprint that features in the pictures belongs to Edgar Vandendungen of Martinborough. Edgar has always had a keen interest in cars and traces it back to when his father used to take him to the Levin racetrack when he was only five years old.

RACETRACK SPECIAL

In the '70s, he was a keen motorsport photographer, which led him to dreams of building a car of his design. He has already purchased a Kawasaki ZX-1100 motorcycle engine that he intends to put into a lightweight mid-engined track-only car that he has already begun to design.

His major problem was finding the time to build it. Being a mechanical engineer, he has the skills and, for his Master's, he wrote a thesis on car design. In 2015, with the years still ticking by, he decided to purchase a homebuilt car so that he could scratch the itch until he had the time to build his own.

Having been a member of the Constructors Car Club for a couple of decades, he was pretty familiar with all the kit cars that were available in New Zealand, and being a fan of the Lotus 7, he set his sights on one of those.

LEITCH SUPER SPRINT KIT

In 2015, he bought a car that had been built in 1993 and purchased as a kit. It was Leitch Super Sprint No. 31, built and first registered by an enthusiast in Matamata. The fibreglass panels are blue, with the rest being polished aluminium.

Powered by a 1.6-litre 4A-GE Toyota engine attached to a five-speed gearbox, it has enough get-up-and-go to keep Edgar highly entertained. His favourite drive is along the Remutaka Hill road between Featherston and Upper Hutt. It is a 30km drive that brings the best out of a car that is better suited to tight corners rather than long straights.

Going around the corners and flicking up and down the gears, the car comes into its own, as it takes corners at a rate only imagined by other cars.

would find a corner for it somewhere, as it was not a vintage car. The show was popular with many people visiting it, and, as they came through the main doors, the first car they saw was Barry's 7 replica.

A lot of people expressed interest, and Barry decided to build another one, except this time, he would prepare for mass production.

RAMPING UP PRODUCTION

Time was spent making jigs to speed up future production and ensuring that quality would be maintained. Slight modifications were made to the chassis, making it stronger. Barry taught himself how to MIG weld, and once again, the work was carried out in his garage after work and on weekends. The name 'Lotus 7 replica' was dropped, and the car was called the 'Leitch Super Sprint'.

FRIENDLY RIVALRY

Sometime during 1986, thinking he could be onto something special, he took the step of advertising the car in *New Zealand Classic Car*, offering it for sale in kit and/or turn-key form.

Coincidentally, in the same magazine, Auckland-based Fraser Cars advertised its version of the Lotus 7 called the 'Fraser Clubman'. These two marques would become New Zealand's longest-lived manufacturers of cars inspired by the Lotus 7.

Both Fraser and Leitch are still building an evolution of their original cars today. (See Fraser Cars – *New Zealand Classic Car* Issue No. 378)

What started off as 'competition' evolved into a friendship between Barry and Fraser, CEO Neil Fraser, and then into racetrack rivalry. The '80s were the heyday of the kit car industry, and there were enough 7 buyers to keep everybody happy.

IT COMES WITH FULL INSTRUCTIONS

Back in Invercargill, Barry had now written a build manual which made the construction of his kits for the homebuilder reasonably straightforward, and he was always available on the phone for those who had questions.

At this point, he was still working out of his home garage. Every spare hour was spent filling customer orders, almost all of which were sold as kits; his homelife was almost non-existent. In 1989, with six cars now sold and plenty of orders on the books, he decided to leave the Freezing Works and go into business by himself. A small farm with a big shed was purchased just outside of Invercargill. From then until now, it has been the home of Leitch Motorsport.

CERTIFICATION ARRIVES

Coincidentally, 1989 was also about the same time that Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA) certification was on the horizon. Although the threat of having to go through certification would put many competent kit manufacturers out of business, Barry embraced it as being good for the industry.

By now, he was a competent MIG welder, but to be on the safe side, he decided to get all his welding tickets in preparation for certification.

When the LVVTA came into being, Barry discovered they were not the devil incarnate that everybody feared, as their focus was on car safety. There was no secret agenda to shut down the home-built car hobby. →

> "A lot of people expressed interest, and Barry decided to build another one"

LEITCH PROMOTION AND EXPORTS

The kit car heyday continued into the '90s. Barry now had a team of people working for him. Kits were constructed in batches of 6, with orders mainly from around the South Island, but a few from the north as well.

It was around this time that he repainted his own Leitch in the colours of the Union flag and added the personalised plate 'LEITCH', creating a lot more interest and sales, including his first car restoration order for Hong Kong after being spotted by an expat Kiwi over here on a racing holiday.

It was not long before Barry found himself exporting cars to Japan, Australia and even in left-hand-drive format for the US market. In Australia, after the introduction of the Australian Design Rules (ADR) during the '80s, it became a very difficult market to break into.

Amongst other things, the chassis had to pass a torsional rigidity test of 2000Nm per degree of twisting. As the car only had a light tubular chassis, this was a bit of a concern. Before shipping it out, Barry did a 'belt and braces' job and added a stressed tunnel to strengthen the frame, then sent it to Australia and waited for the test results. The chassis passed the test easily with a rating of 9900Nm per degree. Just like that, the Australian market was open for business.

OPEN-WHEELER EXPANSION

There is a bit of a superstition amongst manufacturers regarding chassis No. 13 and the possible customer reaction to it. Not wanting to have any superstitious hysteria, Barry kept the 13th chassis and swapped it with the brazed chassis on his car, dropping the number completely. Chassis No. 1 was destroyed. He still owns the No. 1 car, which is driven regularly and is road legal.

In 1994, looking for a new challenge and because of his fondness for racing, Barry decided to build a single-seater race car. Luckily, he had a friend who owned a Brabham BT21, like the Lotus 7; the Brabham was carefully studied before he built a replica of it. This time, he created jigs while he was building it. To date, he has sold 12 of them. These cars are so accurate that owners of real Brabham's have come to him for hard-to-get parts. This was followed by a Lotus 23 replica.

STILL AVAILABLE

Thirty years on, all these cars are still available for enthusiasts to purchase. Over 70 Leitch Super Sprints have left his factory. Most of them are now sold by word of mouth, and almost all of them are turnkey, as Barry explains.

"Home car builders, apart from a dedicated few, are almost extinct. There are still plenty of car enthusiasts who do not have the time to build a car but have the financial resources to have one built for them."

Naturally, the car has evolved with the addition of modern components. A common complaint about the car was the narrow footwell tunnel, which required the driver to either wear racing shoes or clean socks. To solve this problem, later cars had the transmission tunnel narrowed to allow street shoes to be worn.

RESTORATION FOCUS

Leitch Motorsport continues to employ several people, but the focus has shifted from the kit car industry to the restoration of special interest and classic cars. Currently, his team is working on a rare Mk2 Zephyr Farnham Estate. Alongside that is a DeLorean, an Escort and a couple of classic British sports cars. In another corner, work progresses on a turnkey Leitch Super Sprint for another customer. ■

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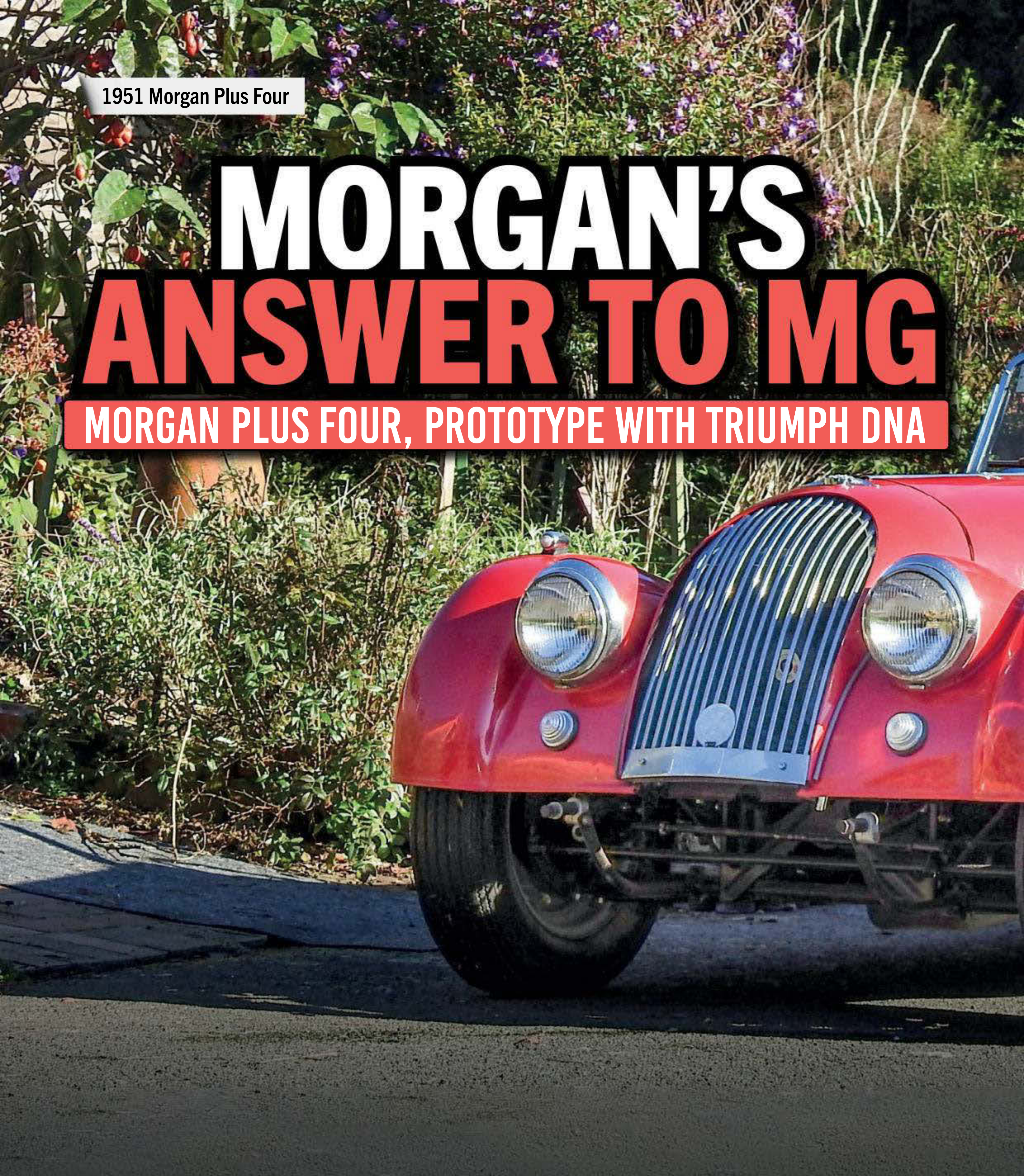
1951 Morgan Plus Four



MORGAN'S ANSWER TO MG

MORGAN PLUS FOUR, PROTOTYPE WITH TRIUMPH DNA

In the late 1940s, Morgan Motorworks' best-selling car, the Morgan Four-Four, was facing stiff competition from the cheaper MG TD. Even worse, the MG was starting to beat it on the racetrack

By Patrick Harlow, photography by Patrick Harlow

Under the bonnet, the Morgan's Standard Motor Company 1267cc OHV was no longer up to the task. A solution had to be found before the Morgan marque became an also-ran.

SEARCH FOR A NEW ENGINE

The obvious solution was to fit a bigger engine, but which one? This task was given to Peter Morgan, the son of HFS Morgan, the company's founder. He joined the firm as a development engineer and draughtsman in 1947 after being demobilised from the army.

Peter was instrumental in creating two prototype cars that would be used as mules to evaluate different engines. These cars looked remarkably similar to the production Morgan Four-Four and, of course, were built with the traditional Ash wood frame.

TWO PROTOTYPES

One of the prototypes was a coupe (chassis No. P.2038), the other was a two-seater roadster (chassis No. P.2100). To fit a larger engine, the wheelbase of each car was extended by 100mm, and the chassis was also stiffened and widened. Another feature on these cars was a Morgan first with the addition of hydraulic brakes and a four-speed gearbox. Both cars were painted Kingfisher blue with black upholstery.

Many different engines were tried, as evidenced by the many engine mounting holes still evident in the chassis. It is possible that Peter even considered using a Fiat engine before eventually settling on the two-litre four-cylinder engine from the Standard Motor Company. Behind this was a the bell housing via a truly short drive shaft, which was unusual at the time.

SURPRISING PERFORMANCE

These prototypes were quite quick for their era. The engine was built to the same spec. as the Triumph TR4, with a high-lift cam and twin SU carburettors giving 51kW (68bhp) on tap. This configuration could propel the 870kg car to 100kph in around 17 seconds, just a second slower than the Series 1 Lotus Seven, which came out almost a decade later.

Autocar extensively road-tested the coupe in April 1951, and in conclusion stated, "Few machines, irrespective of price, could run away from it on a journey and such performance is not easily bought today at the basic price of the latest Morgan Plus Four."

RACE WIN

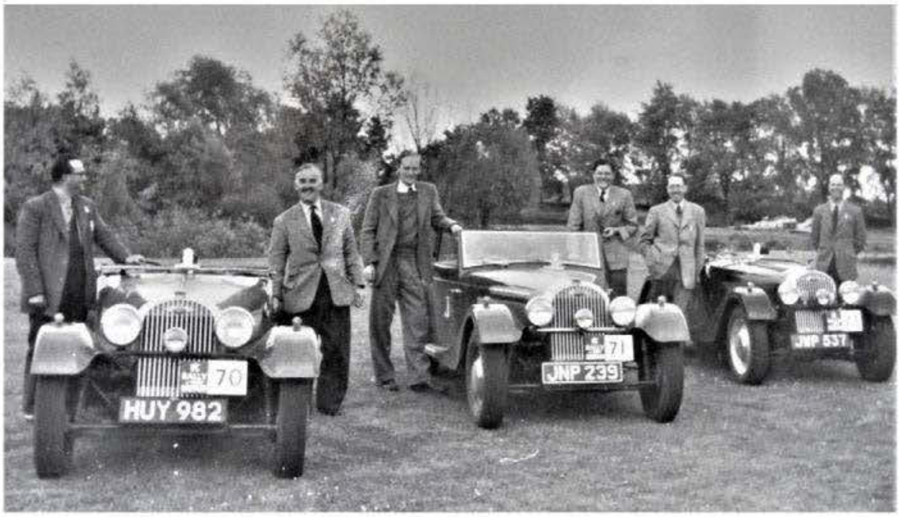
Once all the development decisions had been made, the coupe, which is the car featured in the black and white photographs, became Peter's daily runabout. Its number plate was JNP239. In 1951, both cars were used for racing by the Morgan Works team. Peter Morgan was one of the drivers.

The cars had immediate success in competition, with Morgan winning the team award in the RAC Rally in 1951 and 1952. The two-seater was eventually retired from racing and was altered to conform with the production Morgans of the day.

PUBLIC RELEASE

The Morgan Plus Four was first released to the public in 1950, eventually replacing the iconic three-wheeler, which ceased production in 1952, and quickly became Morgan's most popular model.

HUY 982
JNP 239

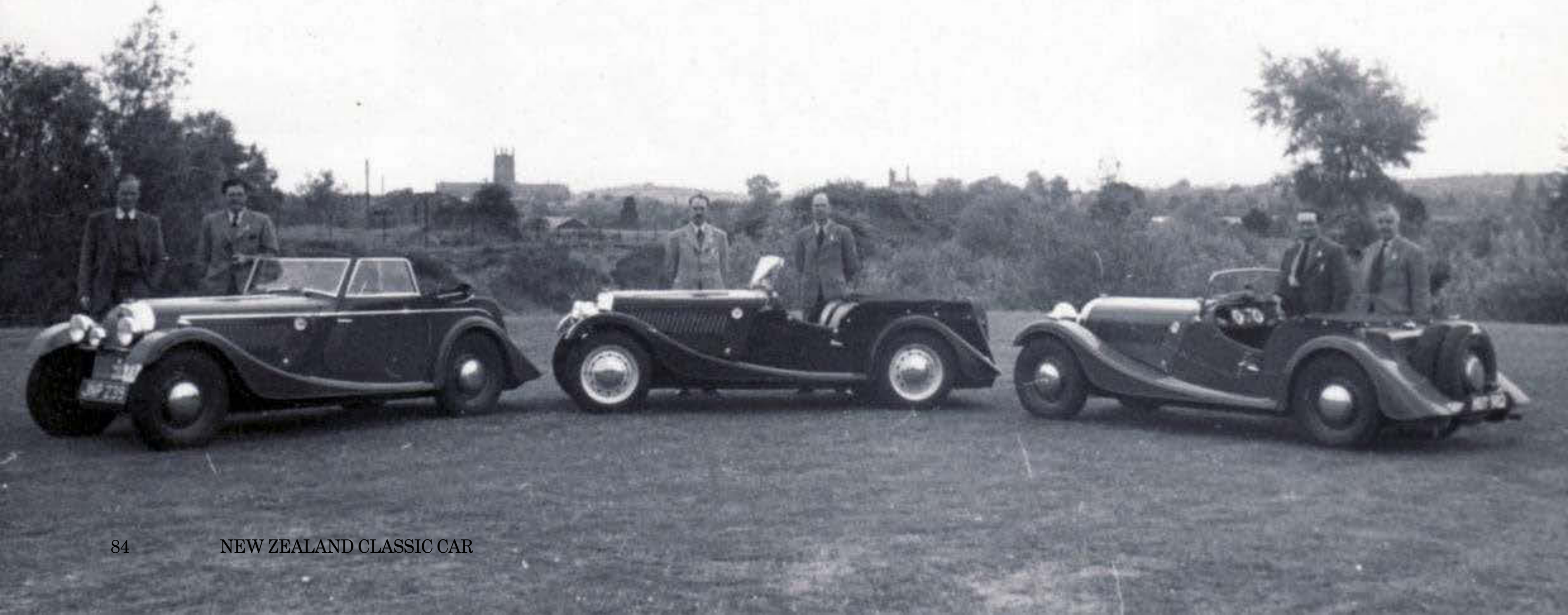


RAC Rally 1951 (photo: Morgan Motor Co.)

The three-wheeler had been around for about 40 years and would not appear again until 2012. By comparison, the Plus Four would go on to become the mainstay of Morgan Motor Company, with only evolutionary changes until 2020.

Production Plus Fours were more modern in appearance than the prototypes. The almost vertical radiator was gone, and the body was a lot curvier than the Morgan Four-Four preceding it. This shape would be the classic shape retained by most Morgans until the release of the aluminium unibody cars in the early 2020s.

The current BMW-powered Morgan Plus Four remains similar in appearance but vastly different in construction and onboard technology, although the



bespoke Ash woodwork remains.

BACK TO THE PROTOTYPES

Getting back to our story. In the early 1950s, the prototypes were no longer needed. It is not known what happened to the two-seater prototype, but its engine, Vanguard V24ME, somehow found its way into the coupe.

Before the coupe (we will now refer to as P2038) was sold, it was completely reconditioned with modern headlights in the wings, and a modern cowl and grill. The back was changed too.

P2038 was bought by Mr T. Hall of Bromsgrove. During his short term of ownership, he had a serious accident while driving it, and P2038 was written off by his insurance company. This could have been the end of our story had not the wreck been bought by Mr Bishop of Worcester, intending to have P2038 restored to its former glory.

At the time, the Morgan Motor Company was extremely busy building Plus Fours and did not have the production capacity to take on P2038, with its many unique panels, due to many of the prototypes' dimensions being different to the production Plus Four.

Once again, this could have been the end of the story. However, when Peter Morgan heard about the car, for nostalgic reasons, due to its history and the fact that it had been Peter's daily driver, the decision was made to rebuild it. The car that emerged from the factory is the car you see in the colour photographs. Needless to say, Mr Bishop was a satisfied customer.

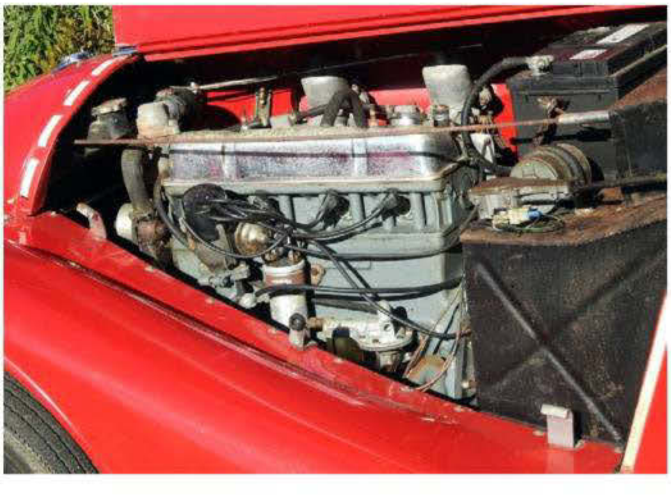
ANTIPODES SURPRISE

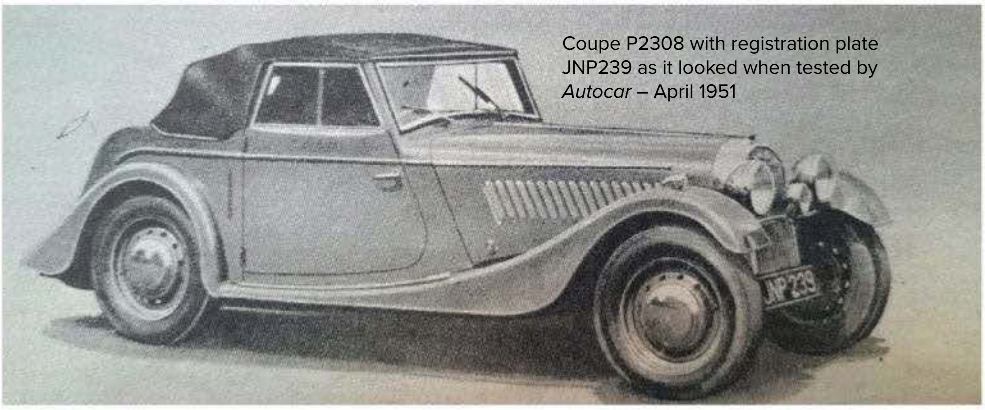
So, how did this very rare one-off Morgan end up in a shed on a farm off a very narrow country road in Upper Hutt, New Zealand? Well, because of one man's love for a Kiwi girl, of course.

After being given a modern, fresh look, P2308 would pass through many hands. Along the way, its history was lost, leaving just another depreciating second-hand Morgan Plus Four in its place.

Then in 1975, a gentleman by the name of St John Wakefield (his name is pronounced 'Sinjin', and not to be confused with a certain canonised apostle), was browsing through the local 'Buy, Sell and Swap' newspaper and saw a Morgan Plus Four for sale. He had always wanted a Morgan but never had the ready cash to buy one. However, in this instance, the timing was excellent as he and his wife, Diana, had just sold their English house in preparation for moving to Diana's home country, New Zealand.

The car was P2038. Situated only two hundred miles (320km) away, in the Midlands, it was too good an opportunity to pass up. After an initial inspection, the deal was done. Rather than drive it home, he drove it straight to where Diana was playing tennis at Battersea Park. Although Diana knew the car was coming, she still could not believe her eyes when she saw it. It was the most stunning car she had ever seen. It was not long before P2038 was booked on a ship and bound for New Zealand.





Coupe P2308 with registration plate JNP239 as it looked when tested by *Autocar* – April 1951

MORGAN ATTRACTION

Weeks later, in New Zealand, wondering why the car was taking so long to arrive, St John went to the shipping agent to inquire as to where it was. The shipping agency knew nothing about it. Fortunately, Diana's uncle happened to go for a stroll around the Wellington Wharf and saw the car parked in a corner. Morgan motor cars were exceedingly rare in New Zealand at the time, and he realised that this must be St John's missing car. For the next two years, it was St John's daily driver.

Although he already suspected that there was something different about P2038, he was quite puzzled to find two men carefully studying his car in a Wellington car park one day. They were fans of the Morgan marque and were trying to figure out why the scuttle of P2038 was over 100mm higher than other Plus Fours they had seen, and more surprisingly, had room for a reasonably large parcel tray in the back. Although it looked like a modern Plus Four, there were several things not quite right about it.

A few weeks later, St John took the car to a show 'n' shine meeting in Waipukurau. John Rock-Evans, an expert on most things Morgan, also spotted the car and confirmed that there was something different about it. He scratched the paint off the chassis number, and for the first time in decades, P2038 revealed her true identity. John did not recognise the number and suggested that he write to the Morgan factory. He did.

In June 1977, St John received a letter from a WJ Waiwyn, who worked in the Morgan Spares and Services Department where the records of all Morgan cars are stored. The letter revealed most of P2308's secrets, with St John surprised that he was the owner of the very first Morgan Plus Four.

RAVAGES OF MOONSHINE HILL ROAD

By this time, St John and Diana had bought a farm on the Moonshine Hill Road in Upper Hutt. St John was working as a doctor at Wellington Hospital, and each day he would travel to work via twelve kilometres of Moonshine Hill Road, which, back then, was gravel, narrow and extremely windy.

P2308 had been taking a bit of a pounding, so St John decided to take it off the road and restore it. As many can attest, it is far easier to take a car apart than it is to put it back together again. Once the car was in bits, St John suspected that he had bitten off more than he could chew. Fortunately, Mel Kernot of the Morgan Club heard of his plight and offered his assistance.

However, even with Mel's help, due to a lack of spare time and other commitments, the restoration would take another 20 years. Long enough for the Upper Hutt Council to finally seal Moonshine Hill Road.

BRIGHT AND SHINY

Once it was back on the road, P2038 was treated with respect due to its age and exclusivity. It is a treasured part of the family. One of the Wakefield's most fondly remembered trips in P2038 was around the Coromandel with friends. But the Moonshine Hill was still not a forgiving road for a classic and rare car.

Indeed, when I drove to the Wakefield's farm to do my interview, I met an earthmoving truck coming in the opposite direction. I had to back up for quite a distance, around some tight corners, before I could find a driveway to turn into, such is the narrowness of the road.

A NEW CARETAKER IS REQUIRED

Not wanting P2038 to be part of another insurance claim, the car was moved into a shed beside the house, where it has sat since 2008. After almost 50 years of ownership, the Wakefields have decided that it is time to move P2038 onto another caretaker. They are both well and truly retired now. P2038, despite being almost 76 years old, still has plenty of life left in her.

Reluctantly, the decision has been made to put the car up for sale. I hope that this classic and extremely rare British prototype sports car will find a new owner in New Zealand. ■

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FORD DEALERS GET BEHIND DAFFODIL DAY

Big turnouts thanks to Ford dealers' sales yards as venues

By Quinton Taylor, photos supplied and taken at Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple, East Tamaki, Auckland

As reported elsewhere in *New Zealand Classic Car*, Ford has come on board nationally as a supporter for the annual Vintage Car Club of New Zealand (VCC) Daffodil Rally for Cancer and the Cancer Foundation of New Zealand, along with the VCC.

CLEARING THE YARDS

Ford dealers across the country got behind the initiative on VCC Daffodil Day, Friday, 25 August, for a great turnout throughout the country, organised through the VCC.

VCC Daffodil Rally for Cancer National Coordinator Kaaren Smylie was thrilled with the result. "Since 2017, with only a two-year pit stop during the COVID pandemic, the Vintage Car Club of New Zealand (VCC) has teamed up with Ford New Zealand and the Cancer Society to turn the nation's love of motoring into a force for good. In that short time, the event has raised more than $250,000 to support Kiwis affected by cancer – and it's only getting bigger," she said.

FORD JOINING FORCES

South Auckland Motors Dealer Principal Michael Tappenden was thrilled about Ford's involvement.

"The Daffodil Rally for Cancer was a fantastic opportunity for the VCC and the Ford dealer network to join forces in support of such a worthy cause," he said. "Our dealership teams have a passion for all things motoring, and we were proud to partner with the Cancer Society for this fantastic initiative."

The event was a national initiative. "From Whangārei to Invercargill, our dealers got right behind the rally, getting involved in events that in some cases saw forecourts cleared to make way for impressive displays of vehicles both old and new," Michael said. "One standout moment was seeing a 1912 Ford Model T Speedster showcased alongside a 2025 Ford Mustang GT at the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple in South Auckland, a great illustration of over a century of motoring evolution. The level of community engagement at each event was tremendous, as was the generosity of the many attendees who donated to the cause." ∎

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The second Chevette, built for sprints like the Ashley Forest Rallysprint

A MAN OF FEW WORDS

Part 2

A great talent behind the wheel of a rally car, Southland's Barry Robinson also had a keen eye for what would work best in a rally car. Long-time co-driver and team mechanic Geoff Lange recalls some of those great underwear-changing moments in Chevettes

By Geoff Lange

UPGRADES – IT'S A WINNER!

The Viva GT four-speed gearbox was ordinary to say the least. After the first season, Barry bought a factory Getrag dog-leg-shift first, 1:1 top, five-speed gearbox. That one item transformed that car. It was a beautiful piece of gear with perfectly spaced close ratios, and the car became an absolute joy to drive, except for the brakes.

GM Dealer Team cars had huge and heavy brakes. Barry was fixated on keeping weight down, so for the entire time he rallied that car, he insisted on using the original 1256cc Chevette solid brake rotors, tiny callipers and DS11 pads. The rears were factory 1256cc drums with VG95 linings that occasionally peeled off the shoes and refused to work when wet, and effectively, it had no handbrake.

You have to think about this a bit. Here we were driving at up to 220kph (135mph) on gravel and trying to retard our forward momentum on a set of brakes designed for a 96kph (60mph) nana car. To a certain extent, they did kind of work for Barry, as he only ever used them to set the angle of the car, and he was more than satisfied with them, but not so much me.

I brought in a set of four-pot, RX-7 alloy front callipers and vented brake rotors. With virtually no fabrication to do, they were in the car in an hour, and they were fantastic.

Barry turned up to check on what I was doing and refused to even try them, as to his mind, they looked too heavy, so off they came and back to the 1256cc stuff.

However, as the rear brakes were non-existent, he relented when I fitted a set of Isuzu Piazza rear discs and callipers. They were outstanding. I often wondered how much more time we could have won rallies by, if we'd had some brakes, but some wins were into the double figures in minutes anyway, so he was right.

In Barry's hands, that car won many events, including the Otago Rally in 1981, '82, and '83. Each time, with increasing gaps, back to the opposition. Rallies were extremely hard to win in those days. Components were not as reliable, and regardless of the preparation, cars just broke down.

After our third win driving back to Dunedin, we guessed no one would match that soon – and we were right, until Hayden Paddon won 10 straight. He was exceptional too.

FINDING THE RIGHT ENGINE

There was a series of engines in the car. Originally, these were all built by Russell Murray, then after 1983 by Denis Lyon. As the CF Bedford 2.3-litre was originally half a V8, they lie down to the left at a 45-degree angle. All the Chevette engines have been angled up to 30 degrees to make room for the exhaust system. All inlet, exhaust manifolds, and the sump are handmade. A true labour of love.

In 1983, we built up a 2.6-litre stroker Blydenstein twin-cam engine we decided to use for the final round of the 1983 New Zealand Rally Championship. What a weapon! It was glorious to use. We were leading the championship by 38 points, with the last round being double points, and the only guy who could beat us was Malcolm Stewart. We went to Auckland and only managed 3km into the second stage, and it nipped up a piston.

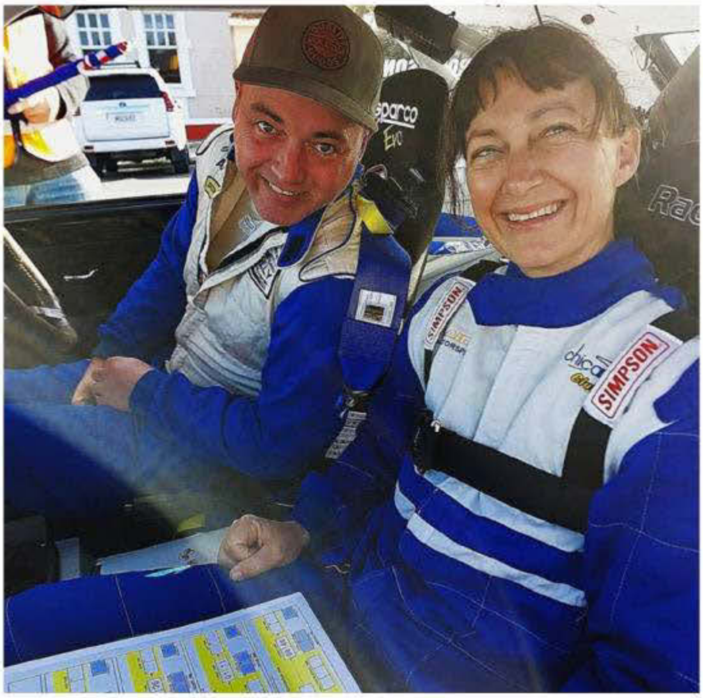
It was extremely disappointing, and as we got out of the car at the side of the road in the special stage, Barry kicked the driver's door shut, dented it a bit, and broke the window. Other than a minor right-rear mudguard dent, that was the only damage he ever did to that car.

Many times we've been asked why we risked the championship by using a new engine. Not long after that rally in 1983, we had the Canterbury national rally, and we put the single-cam 2.3-litre back in it. About 90km in, that engine broke a cam belt going through a ford, so either way, we were destined not to win the national title.

DISTINCTIVE IN BLACK

Just to set the record straight: there are two black Chevettes. The sister car is a lightweight, unregistered car that we built solely for sprints and the Ashley Forest hill-climbs. We started building that in 1985, and it mirrors the rally car but is much lighter.

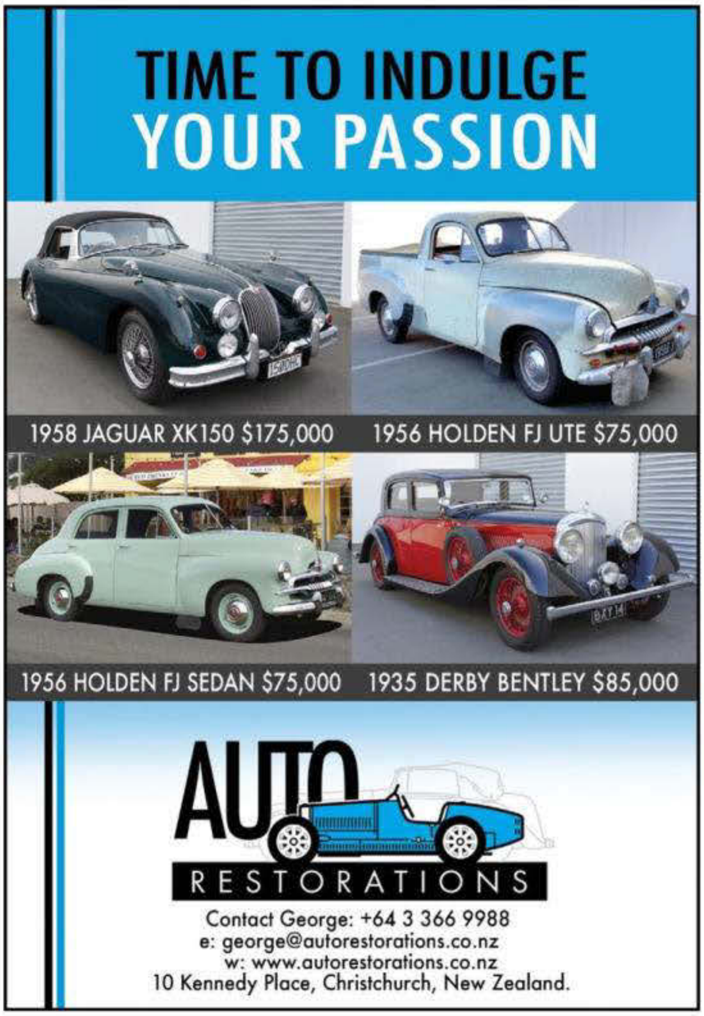
That's the one where I sat in the back, and eventually, when I retired, Dennis Lyon fitted increasingly larger wings on



Chris Lange and Barry's daughter Anna in the rebuilt Chevette

it, and he too sat in the back pulling levers to trim them.

The sister cars were back together again. There was never a thought about the gender of the car at the time we were building the car; they thought of the Chevette as being female, and on reflection, we really loved her, what she achieved for us, and how she made us feel. A very special girl.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10 Kennedy Place, Christchurch, New Zealand.

CHANGING HANDS

The rally car, 'IH6231', with the twin-cam 2.3-litre engine, was sold to my brother-in-law, Dave Glasson, from Wellington. The covenant was that it was to come back to Barry when Dave wanted to sell it. Dave used it for a brief period as a sealed sprint car but felt it was too slow. Eventually, David trailered the rally car back to Barry, swapped the twin-cam 2.3 from it into the lighter and more race-suitable Toyota Sprinter shell for it, and took it back to run in the Wellington Street Race. During the four days Dave was in Gore working on the car, he was absent while his wife had a baby. Touchy subject in our family. Eventually, Dave sold the Sprinter to John Wadsworth, again under the proviso that it be returned to Barry if it were ever on the market. After some years, John sold it back to Barry, and both cars are now back in the Robinson family.

The rally car and sprint car sat in Barry's shed in Alexandra for over 20 years, and we had talked about getting them going for Barry to do local car club events, hill-climbs, autocross, gravel sprints, and the like.

Early in 2022, Barry called me one day as he had fitted the original type 2.3-litre single-overhead camshaft into the rally car and had it running. I went straight over to see it, but it had an oil-pump pressure issue, and we were reluctant to fire it up. However, after all these years, it set a fire in my life, and there was great excitement.

ON REFLECTION

Sadly, Barry died in 2022, before the car ran properly, and he never saw the car finished or gave it another outing. However, mid 2023, Roger Laird from Barry's home club, the Eastern Southland Car Club, called and asked if we could trailer the Chevette to Wyndham for a static display at the inaugural Barry Robinson Memorial Rally. We had a look at the car and, with the Robinson family's support, decided that Barry's godson, Chris Lange, should be able to get it going, and he and Barry's daughter Anna, co-driving, could be the lead '00' car, for this special event.

The project to get it going again was underway. When the car reappeared in its hometown of Wyndham, it was extremely moving and a total miracle that it was actually going again. Not only was the car there running beautifully, but it was then going to lead the entire rally from start to finish, much as Barry had always done rallying in the same car.

All of us were there to honour Barry's life and achievements, which were encapsulated in seeing that car move, hearing the distinctively deep engine note through the Nuffield tractor muffler we'd once fitted, and reminiscing on how Barry and that car had made us all feel.

Barry was a top bloke, and before there was such a thing, he was an influencer, and everyone knows about his skill in that black Chevette.

Barry's younger brother Daryl died in a car accident, and after that, Barry's cars were painted black, and the steering wheel he used was in memory of him. ∎

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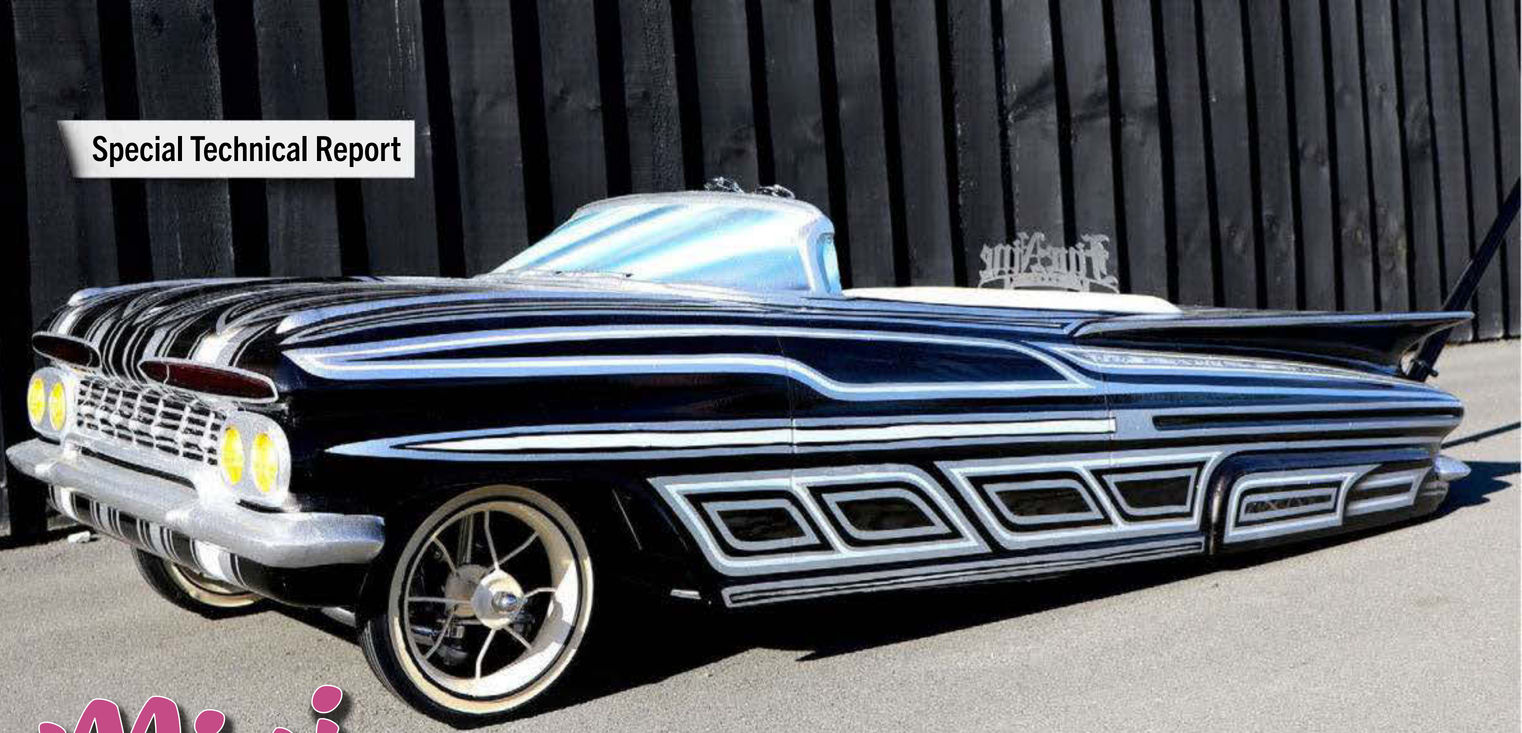


Mini MASTERPIECE

A CUSTOM PEDAL CAR TURNING HEADS

By Melissa Hannan

For her first contribution to *New Zealand Classic Car*, Melissa recalls a special, innovative project that she designed to attract youngsters to the world of fabrication and custom creations. The result? A breathtaking miniature custom!

What began as a bare fibreglass shell six years ago could easily have been another forgotten project, left to gather dust. In 2024, with Girls 'n' Gasoline taking off, my vision changed.

This wasn't just going to be a build. It was destined to become a show-stopping creation, a one-of-a-kind, crafted for kids to experience the thrill of custom culture at trade events.

CUSTOM PAINT TIME

To bring the vision to life, I turned to none other than 'Stace the Ace' Roper. Together, we mapped out a plan: a body drenched in flake and patterned paint. I chose black and silver – a selection I'd likely never see gleaming across a full-sized classic in my own garage.

From there, Stace took the reins. What followed was a painstaking process measured not in hours, but in metres of tape.

Every line was masked, every panel layered, each stage demanding precision and patience. Custom paint of this calibre is never simple – it's an art form. With a workshop buried in flake and days of meticulous layering, the transformation unfolded.

The result? A finish that's nothing short of breathtaking!

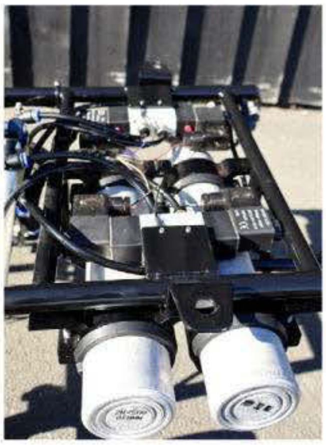
ONTO THE CHASSIS MAN

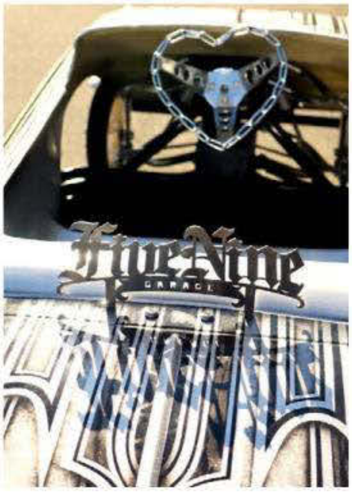
With the body complete, the next step was clear: a full custom chassis. I had already sourced a set of wheels from the States, so the hunt was on for the right craftsman to bring the vision to life. That's when I reached out to Isaac at Atomic Machine Works in Christchurch.

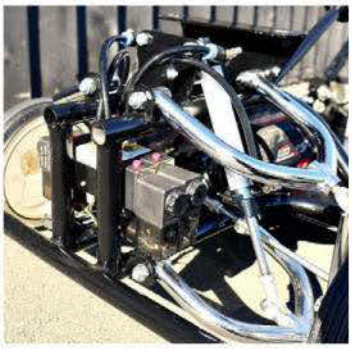
I laid out my idea – a chassis that could run on air, drop flat to the ground, and even pull off a three-wheel stance, just like the legendary low-riders of America.

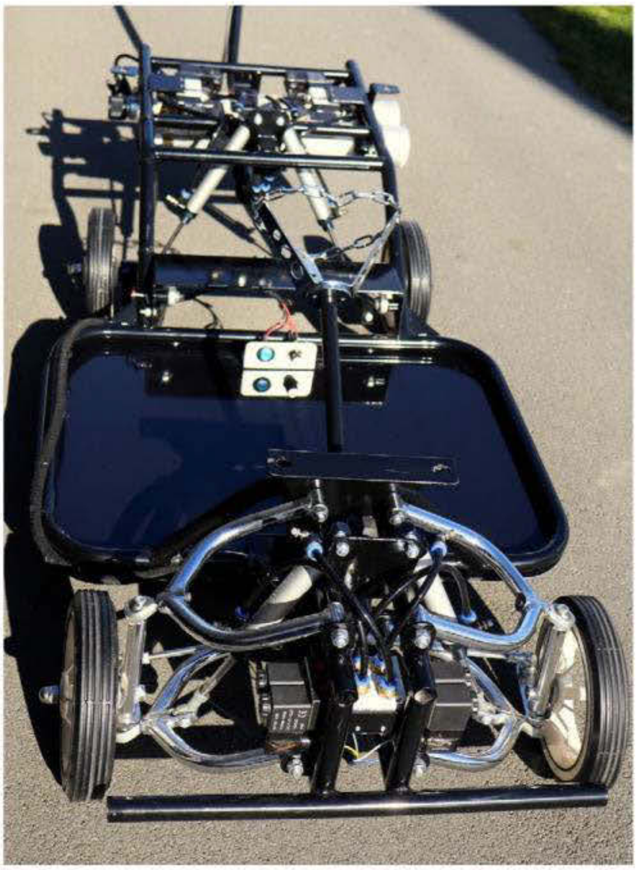
It had to be unique, something no one else had seen at this scale in New Zealand. After just one conversation, I knew Isaac was the man for the job.

As the build progressed, more details emerged. A custom heart-chain steering wheel, fully operational steering, and a plaque at the rear proudly carrying my









Five Nine Garage brand. Downsizing the complexity of a full-sized chassis into this miniature version was no small task, but Isaac transformed an idea into a fully functional work of art.

NO EASY TASK – Q&A WITH ISAAC MCCLEARY

How did you come up with the chassis design?

I wanted to keep it simple yet still rigid enough to be supported under suspension movement and the weight of a kid, so I decided to use a thin-walled tube. I first laid the body onto a board and traced around the body to give me the parameters I had to keep within.

I also did this for the side profile, so I knew what area I had to work with for the suspension. I then drew the wheelbase onto the board. I started designing a minimalist chassis that could incorporate wishbone front suspension, four-bar rear suspension, and yet still be able to house tanks, valves, and a battery. I quickly found that there wasn't much room to work with.

Fabrication didn't take too long due to all the planning. Elite Powder Coating in Christchurch took care of the gloss black powder coating of the frame.

Can you tell us a bit about the steering and suspension set-up?

I wanted to keep the suspension system similar to that of a '58–'64 Chevy so that it would behave much like a full-size low-rider with hydraulic suspension.

I created a welding fixture to ensure all the front control arms were uniform, and then machined weld bungs for the ends, allowing rod ends to be used as control arm bushes and ball joints, etc. The same was done for the trailing arms and wishbone in the rear.

The steering is a simple go-kart style. For the steering wheel, the chain was TIG-welded together to form a heart shape. Then the face of the wheel was drawn in CAD, laser cut, and bent to fit the heart.

Once the suspension components and steering wheel were all complete, it was then all polished by hand and dipped in chrome by Pole Electroplaters in Christchurch.

What was the most challenging part of the build?

Working out how to have a minimalist, independent air system that wouldn't quickly run out of air. The solution was to use SodaStream bottles as these hold 800psi of CO_2, and if regulated down, will last the distance.

A regulator was found to do the job, but a fitting had to be machined on the lathe to adapt the regulator to the thread of the SodaStream bottle.

The lift and drop are taken care of by four, 100mm stroke, air cylinders. These are controlled by their own independent valves for the up and down, allowing the car to saw-saw, side-side, and three-wheel.

A Milwaukee battery power base is used to power the electric valves. This allows for easy removal and charging if needed. The aluminium control box was polished and engine turned for a timeless look, and utilises small toggle switches to control the air cylinders and a plug so it can be disconnected from the car. ■

FIVE NINE GARAGE
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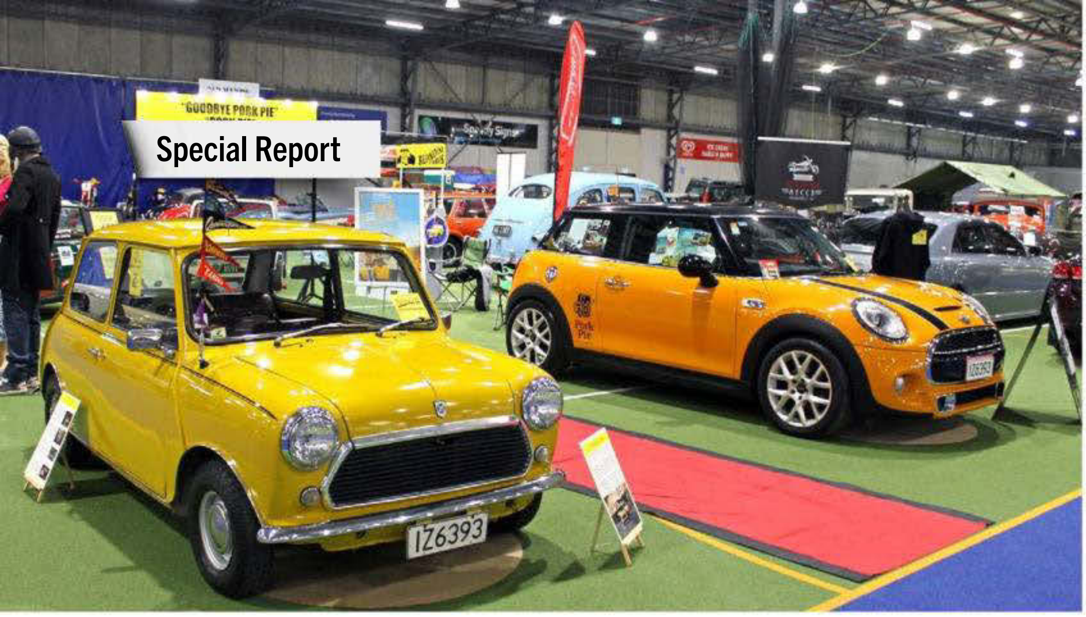
SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks to both Stace and Isaac. Without their talent and dedication, this vision might have been left to gather dust, like so many unfinished projects. Instead, they helped transform it into a one-of-a-kind creation that will inspire and bring joy for years to come.



OTAGO TOWING AUTOSPECTACULAR

DUNEDIN 2025

By Josh Kelly

Otago Towing 2020 Ltd, Autospectacular 2025 was held on 13 September at Dunedin's Edgar Centre. The South Island's largest indoor car show, this year celebrated 125 years of Fiat, 100 years of Chrysler, 100 years of pickup trucks, and the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ Days. The show also has a theme for clubs to base their displays on; 'Movies' was this year's theme.

MOVIE CARS

'The Castle' and 'The Wombles' featured, and a couple of displays showcased genuine screen-used movie cars. There was the Wolseley 1300 from the 2009 film 'No Petrol No Diesel!' and on the NZ Mini Owners stand, there were both the original IZ6393 Mini from 'Goodbye Pork Pie,' along with the stunt car used in the 2016 remake 'Pork Pie.' The Goodbye Pork Pie Mini has been in storage since the early 2000s and proved to be a highlight of the show, attracting attention all day.

The 1934 Duesenberg Model J, originally owned by Carole Lombard (wife of Clarke Gable) was also on display; a very special car that we are lucky to have in NZ!

SOMETHING FOR YOUNG AND OLD

Rocker cover racing also featured this year. This proved very popular with rocker covers modified for racing in all shapes, sizes, and colours, taking part. The 'Toyspectacular' gives kids a chance to take part, where they can create their own display to exhibit at the show.

AUTOSPECTACULAR A TOP SHOW

The quality of vehicles on display is incredibly high, and is always a diverse range of classics, modern, race cars, and everything in between. Now in its 47th year, the Autospectacular is a must-see for any automotive enthusiast.

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MACH 1

Boss MUSCLE

By Quinton Taylor, photography by John Galvin

If you want to create a standout muscle car, then look no further for inspiration than some of the impressive movie star cars that have exploded out of Hollywood. Our poster car from our last issue is a prime example

Steve McQueen encouraged our fascination with creating US movie tribute cars, with that famous chase scene around the hills of San Francisco in the 1968 movie *Bullitt*.

Using a modified 1968 Ford Mustang 390 Fastback, versus the bad guy in the '68 Dodge Charger for the stunt scenes with an identical-looking Mustang for close-ups.

It seems rivalry for star roles was as intense in the movies as it was in the marketplace, with Mustangs starring again in the '74 movie *Gone in 60 Seconds* with the role going to a '71 Ford Mustang Fastback. A '67 Shelby GT500 starred in the 2000 remake with Nicholas Cage.

[Ben Selby has a neat story about a gathering of star cars in Christchurch, elsewhere in this issue of *New Zealand Classic Car* – Ed.]

The movies also introduced us to Keanu Reeves as John Wick in 2014, along with a striking Ford Mustang Boss 429 – or was it?

RARE BOSS

Ford Mustang Boss 429s are a rare item, and extremely valuable, so the movie company modified some '69 Ford Mustang Mach 1s as a cheaper lookalike option, running modern Coyote V8s and an automatic transmission.

Four *John Wick* movies later, and the list comprised '69 Ford Mustang Mach 1, '70 Chevrolet Chevelle SS 396, '71 Plymouth 'Cuda, and a 2011 Dodge Charger SXT in each one, a welcome list in anyone's classic garage!

The Boss 429ci engine was Ford's combatant behemoth running in Nascar against Dodge's Hemi. Competition was fierce, with Ford attesting that the 429ci V8 was rated at a mere 375bhp when in reality it was probably well over 500bhp.

John Wick, the mysterious bogeyman in the dark suit and black shirt, and his movies have redefined the action genre, with muscle cars an integral part of the plot, especially in the first, in which his Mustang gets a lot of screen time. They look and sound great, which encourages the petrol heads among us.

REDEFINING A MACH 1

Peter and Sonya Jackson's 1969 Ford Mustang Mach 1 has recently undergone a *John Wick* transformation with John Galvin's team at The Surgery in Wellington. The change in character has been breathtaking.

Peter explains how the transformation came about: "I've had the car for probably about 12 years. I bought it

out of New Plymouth, and it was in a Grabber Blue colour, with all the usual decals of a Mach 1 Mustang. Its original colour was a Grabber Yellow, and it came into the country quite some time ago. It's had several owners, and I have all its history."

The Mustang spent a lot of its early days cruising in the Auckland region before moving to Wellington then to New Plymouth, then Peter bought it.

"I gradually realised it was starting to get a bit of rust coming through here and there, particularly around the back of the roof where the pillars meet the main part of the car. They all go there," he says.

The Mustang was still in good condition, so they needed to decide what to do to keep it that way.

A LITTLE SURGERY

When it comes to classics, it's always a matter of careful choices, how much the work is going to cost, and if it's cost-effective, as Peter explains: "It was a matter of thinking, well, at some stage I probably need to get it repainted just to be fair to the car because it was otherwise in reasonably good condition, so then I embarked on that whole adventure, you know, through those guys. They're a good outfit. John and his team do a great job."

Peter has seen the *John Wick* movies, and with his car being a '69 Mach 1 just as they used in the first and second movies, it seemed to be the ideal scenario to create a *John Wick* tribute car

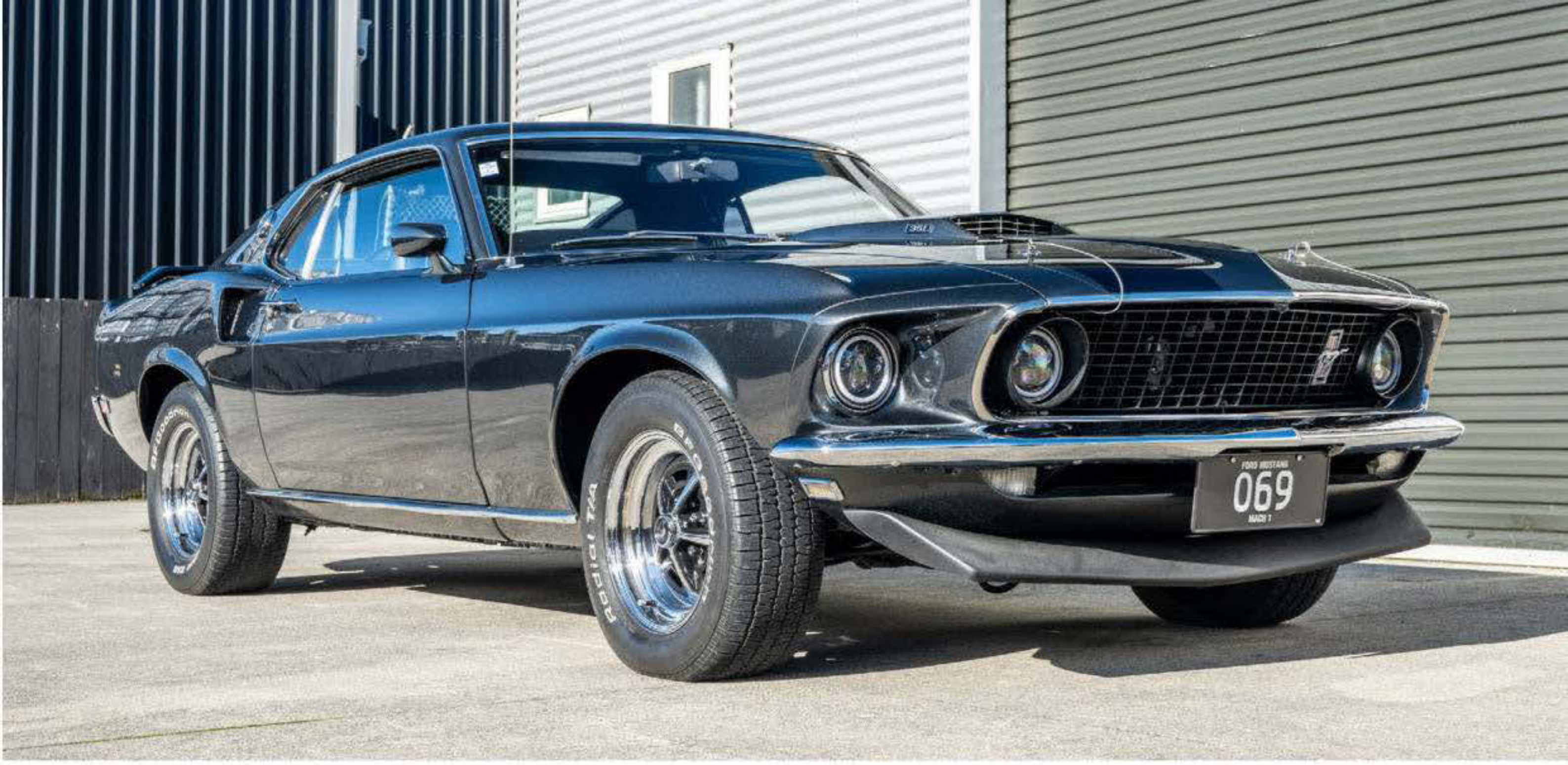
"You know, it's well worth the money, although it's a lot of money," Peter says. "Yeah, that's something you don't set out on without a lot of thought, isn't it?"

CHANGING PRIORITIES

Prior to the Mustang going into the workshop, Peter drove it regularly, but now his perspective on the Mustang has changed. It's a stunning transformation which has brought with it a sudden realisation.

"I've driven it a heck of a lot, although not so much since it's been renovated, because it arrived back to me right at the beginning of winter, so, unfortunately, I haven't been in it a lot since," he says. "And, of course, you know, it's so nice now. Previously, I would park it in town on the side of the road, and I wouldn't actually be worried about it. But now, with a paint job as good as it is, I'm probably going to be a bit more picky as to where I park. It's sort of gold on four wheels, isn't it? Well, it is a little bit, yeah."

Like many of us following a restoration, there was always that on-tenterhooks dread of the inevitable. "I can see that I'm going to be upset if it ends up with a big stone chip or something like that," Peter acknowledges. "So, otherwise,



I have driven it a fair bit, back up to New Plymouth a couple of times for car shows and all of that."

SUNDAY CRUISER

The Mustang is now definitely a Sunday cruising car, and for weekends away.

"It's still fitted with a 351 Windsor and a four-speed manual. I don't know if it was originally a manual [transmission]. I think someone may have changed that, but it's all still original inside. It's just that, unfortunately, someone decided to change the paint colour for better or for worse, so now we're down that road of actually making it, I wanted to make it look a little bit more current, I suppose. I haven't put the stripes back on it, and it's now got some machined bonnet latches. It's still the same type of bonnet pin, but it hasn't got the three screws in it as the others looked quite rough," says Peter.

At the front, LEDs have been fitted, providing better night driving: "I've had them rigged up so all four come on as driving lights just in the outer ring, so it looks quite mean in the daytime, especially in the winter. It looks quite aggressive, and I quite like that little bit of retro."

The result has been a new appeal for this tribute theme.

"Especially today as they have a bit of a following, even with the younger people, and to see, I guess, them nudging what's popular today is quite cool. It's changing and there's a lot of interest out there from young people," he says.

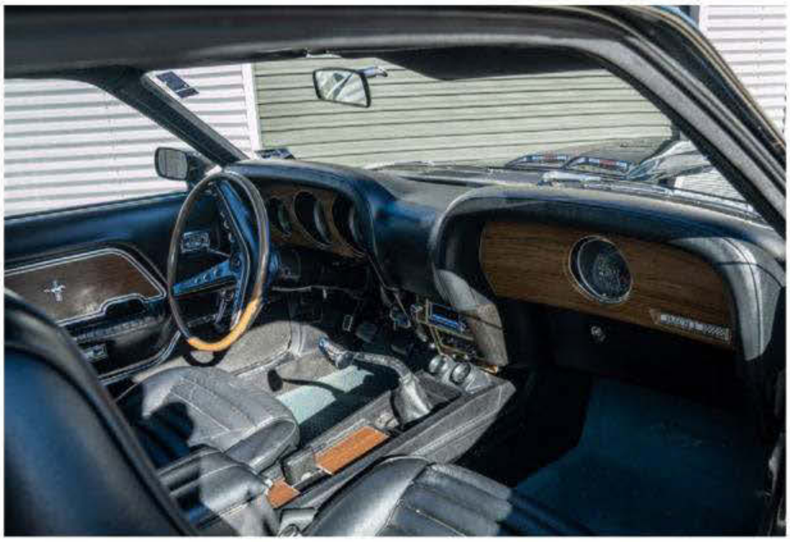
MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

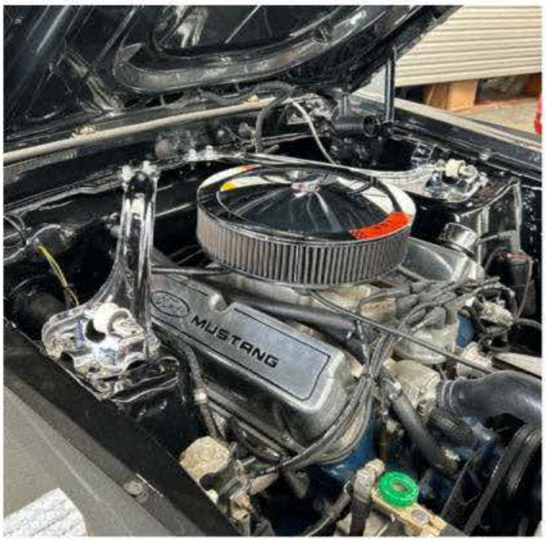
I asked Peter what motivated the change to the popular *John Wick* tribute.

"I really like the two-tone grey, especially if you Google *John Wick* on the web, what comes up is a particular car, I think, where they were taking that model, and they were totally rebuilding it. There are shots of it – I think it must be on a tarmac – and it just looks so cool. It's missing its striping and stuff, but it still looks amazing.

"I've kept the original wheels, as I just love those wheels. They look really cool. I think the clean lines of it, the one-piece look, and they don't make cars like that anymore, with just that one piece kind of shell. It's an incredible piece of panelling, and they're a distinctive-looking car as it is. Then you go and put these little detail bits in it. It just makes them something else again," he explains.

Like several Mustang owners, Peter has subtly increased the appeal of his car: "You do see quite a few Mustangs that have just been ever so slightly changed. They look fabulous, done well. I think it'd take a long time to get over this one at the moment!" ∎





MEMORIES: A JAFFA'S JOURNEYS ON THE MAINLAND

Part 1

A Historical South Island Saga

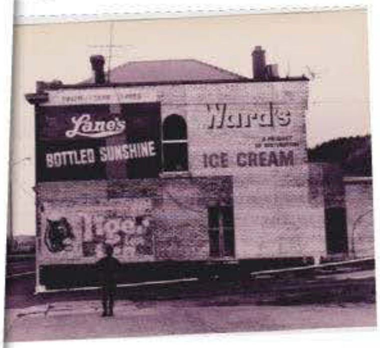
Growing up in Auckland in the 1960s and '70s, the 'Mainland' South Island took on a mystical image of a separate country. Gerard recounts his adventures in facing the challenging topography of the south along with the mechanical prowess, or lack thereof, of his available transport back in the day

Story and Images by Gerard Richards

Infamous '65 Vauxhall Victor, hero of my first South Island tour in 1981, pictured here earlier on the Firth of Thames near Auckland in 1979

1974 English-assembled Ford Escort 1100 struggled with the hills on our 1982 South Island tour

1974–'75 Ford Falcon outside the Geraldine Cinema, 1999 South Island road trip


Old advertising on Port Chalmers Road, Dunedin, October 1999

The barrier of the Cook Strait seemed insurmountable during my childhood/adolescent years. Apart from a one-day flying visit to Nelson in 1974, on a training experience for the Government Tourist Bureau, of which I was briefly an employee, I'd never set foot in the big country. Actually, this isn't entirely true. In 1979, my brother, a cousin, a friend of his and I made a heart-stopping flight in a Cessna, a six-seater light plane, from Auckland to Te Anau and back, to do an eight-day walk in a remote part of Fiordland. The madness of this flight and gruelling high-country expedition still haunts me to this day, but that's a tale for another time.

All this was about to change. It wasn't until 1981, when I was 26, that my partner of the time and I decided to embark on an ambitious scheme to undertake the full tour. Unbeknownst to me at the time, this was to be the first of six driving marathons around the Deep South. All of them were memorable, but the first one was especially so.

ON THE ROAD IN A DODGY CAR

An adventurous idea it was, but at the time, I didn't fully grasp to what extent. Aotearoa/New Zealand was a different place in 1981. I can still feel the excitement of the anticipation before heading off. The machinery at our disposal to undertake this escapade was not what you'd call awe-inspiring, I have to say. My partner had a 1964 Morris 1100, and I had a 1965 Vauxhall Victor. Both machines were far removed from their first flush of youth.

Beggars can't be choosers. The '65 Victor had to be it, as it had a bigger engine and more luggage capacity. However, it's on longer journeys that the Achilles heel, or weak links, emerge with your set of wheels. I have to say, though, in hindsight, I was gobsmacked that this flawed piece of English automobile craftsmanship made the whole tour from Auckland to Invercargill and back without expiring once. In later years, I viewed it as the eighth wonder of the world!

Outwardly, it did the business, but that's not to say it was all smooth sailing. Far from it. In fact, there were many stressful and anxious moments. Like most tired English vehicles of the era, it tended to overheat. Negotiating the many hills was a fraught affair, as we eagle-eyed the climbing temperature gauge on uphill gradients and only felt a degree of relief as we descended the peaks, with the gauge returning to a normal reading. We never had to add water, though. Why we weren't ecstatic that the dreaded boiling engine catastrophe had been avoided yet again was due to another ugly problem that reared its head instantly to replace it.

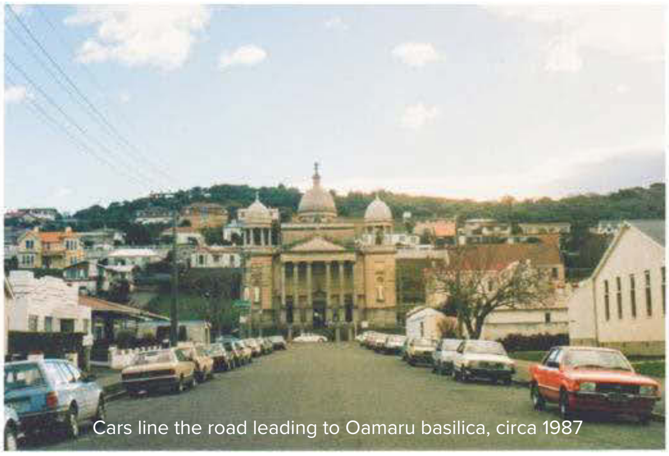
We were leaking brake fluid (over the tyres), as the brake wheel cylinders on the drum brakes were worn and struggling to stop the fully loaded vehicle. This was particularly disconcerting when descending these fairly steep downhill sections with minimal retaining fences to corral a runaway car. It was necessary to stop several times a day to check and top up the brake fluid reservoir.

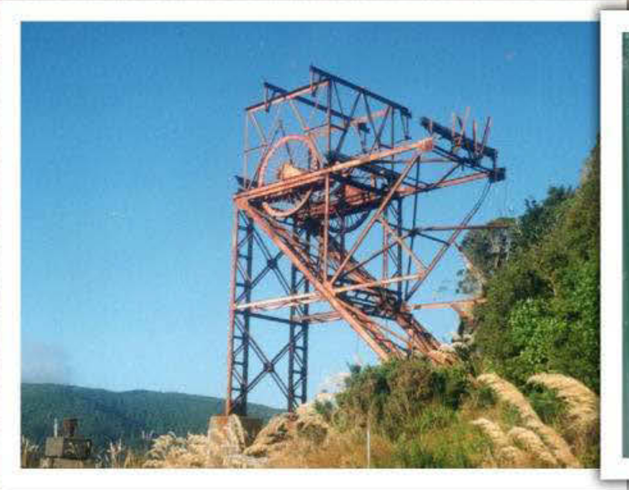
Just in case this wasn't enough premature-grey-hair-inducing material, as the trip wound on, we noticed an ominous growing diff whine ('differential' for non-mechanical types). This added to the edge of uncertainty, but like the aforementioned issues, it held together too. The brakes and differential were expensive repairs that awaited me on return to the big smoke.

ENTRANCING SIGHTS IN THE SOUTH

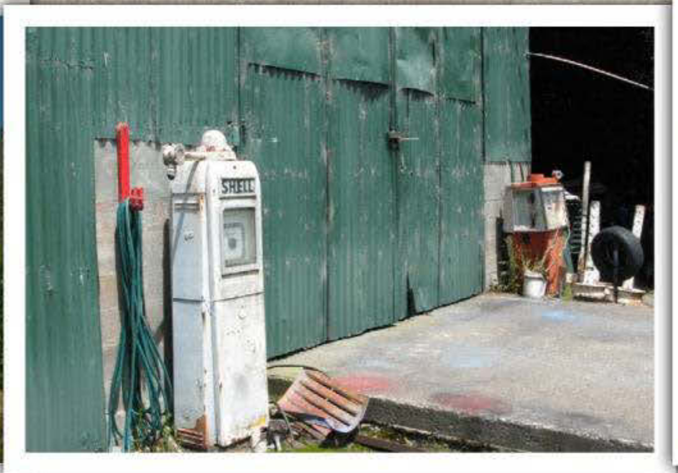
Despite all this mechanical mayhem, the evocative flavour of the south made a profound impact. I was fixated at the time with settler history in frontier regions, particularly the early coal and gold mining on the West Coast and

Hokitika main street, 1987 South Island tour


Cars line the road leading to Oamaru basilica, circa 1987



Derelict Denniston mine winch tower, 1999 West Coast South Island tour



Derelict gas pumps at Dipton on Queenstown to Invercargill highway, 2020

Otago. Our pilgrimage took in a lot of legendary and some tragic sites, such as Denniston, Brunner, Dobson, Blackball, Reefton in Westland, and also the first place that gold was discovered near Lawrence, in Otago, at Gabriel's Gully. We also took in the magnificent glaciers at Fox and Franz Joseph.

We had planned to camp on the trip, but instead we ended up staying in basic motor camp cabins. There were no frills in those days. Carrying all this extra gear we didn't use was a pain and didn't help with the brakes or keeping the engine cool.

Along with the magnificent terrain we embraced on the journey, the towns and cities also made a strong impact. I enjoyed all the frontier towns in Westland as I did Invercargill, Dunedin, and Christchurch. The Scottish links, particularly in Dunedin, were fascinating. I was completely oblivious of indigenous Māori history back in the day.

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE LOCALS

South Islanders' uninspiring attitude to us North Islanders, and even worse, coming from Auckland, was prevalent at the time. I clearly remember episodes, particularly fuelling up at gas stations, when the pump attendant – yes, they did have them in those days – seeing we were on tour, popped the question, "Where are you from?" I got to dread this after a while. On reluctantly mentioning I was from Auckland, it seemed to unleash a torrent of corrosive views regarding the Queen City. Often, it transpired they'd never been there.

Their diatribe went something like this: "Why do you want to live there in that hellhole? What a horrible place to live, with all those people. I'd be afraid to go out the front door. You're likely to be mugged or robbed, aren't you? That is when you're not stuck in traffic."

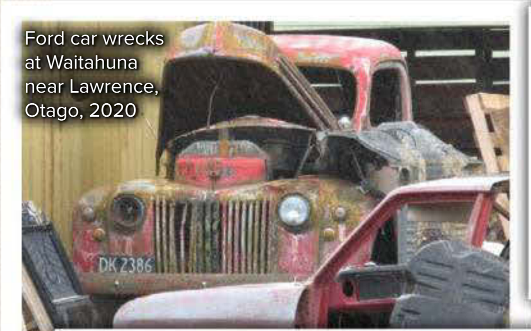
The tirade went on like that, and I was left with the feeling they saw Auckland as a den of iniquity in which only people not in their right mind would want to live.

Times have changed. I've just returned from another fairly extensive road trip on the mainland, 44 years on from that memorable experience. Threads of the frontier still exist on the West Coast, but most of the populace appears to be now part of the global village. The contemporary version now has us flying direct, accommodation and reliable rental cars booked online, and Google Maps to tell you exactly where you're going.

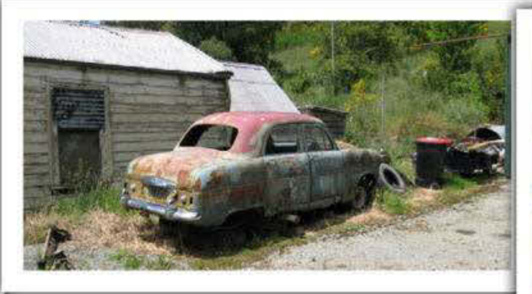
But I'm getting ahead of myself here; it's time to return to the 1980s.

THE CULINARY EXPERIENCE

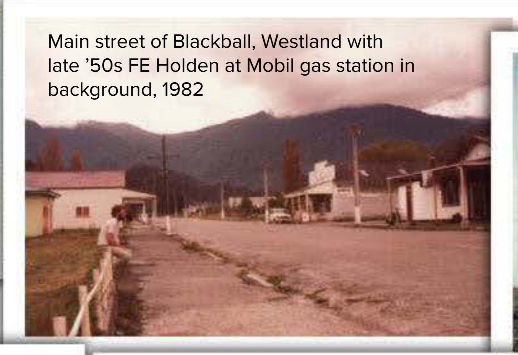
Cafés, restaurants, and bars that offered relatively edible food weren't thick on the ground in the 1980s when I made my first three excursions. Coffee bars or lounges with state-of-the-art



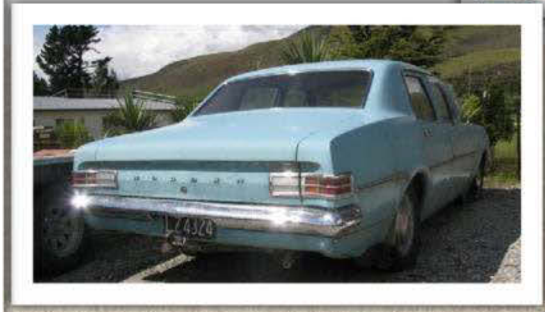
Ford car wrecks at Waitahuna near Lawrence, Otago, 2020



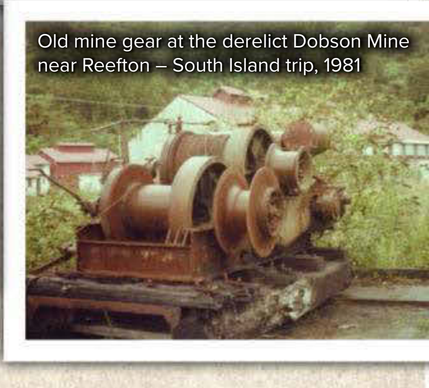
Ford Zephyr Mk1 derelict at Dipton on Queenstown to Invercargill highway, 2020



Main street of Blackball, Westland with late '50s FE Holden at Mobil gas station in background, 1982



1968 Holden Kingswood at Glenorchy, Queenstown road trip, October 2013



Old mine gear at the derelict Dobson Mine near Reefton – South Island trip, 1981

Derelict petrol pumps, Okains Bay, Akaroa, 2025

Fabulous old Vulcan Hotel in old Central Otago gold mining town Saint Bathans, 1997

Historic Speights Criterion Hotel, Oamaru, 1999

décor and offerings were the main options. The formula was often dark surroundings with Spanish matador or leopard-skinned women prints on the wall, with names like 'Aladdin's Coffee Bar', 'The Cozy Coffee Lounge', or the 'Copper Kettle' being common. Kona coffee stewing all day on the element was the staple, accompanied by pies, sausage rolls, and white-bread sandwiches. What's not to like? In fairness, it probably wasn't much different in the north. Pubs seemed to either be antiquated and basic, or booze barns back then. Restaurants? Well, we didn't really sample any in that era.

RETURNING TO THE SOUTH 1982

The fallout from our first southern mission (1981) left an evocative flavour in our minds in the months afterwards. The attraction of the places we hadn't seen burned bright, and we regrouped for another attack in the summer of '82. The plan was to press the '65 Vauxhall Victor back into action with renewed brakes and diff.

However, the best-laid plans only got as far as Hamilton when the fatigued rear springs had the top of the wheel arches grinding down on the tyres, when we hit any bumps. There was no future in flogging the old warhorse any further, and we beat the trail back to Auckland to pick up my partner's 1974 Mk1 Ford Escort 1100. This was an English-assembled version, with higher specs and cloth seats, etc. A nice car, though underpowered.

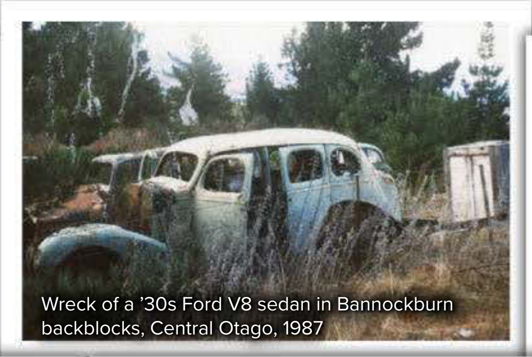
The time setback was a recipe for some angst, but we hit the ferry on time. The Escort was a willing performer, but loaded up, it struggled on the higher terrain. In the upper reaches of Arthur's Pass from Greymouth to Christchurch, for an agonising time, it seemed it wouldn't make it. Down to first gear and crawling, in a state of near desperation, we eventually crested the summit and wound our way slowly down into Canterbury. The only other moment was when the exhaust system fell off on route to Lyttelton, and it sounded as though we had a V8 on our hands – especially going through the long tunnel – necessitating repairs in Christchurch.

Highlights of the tour were Golden Bay, Motueka, Nelson, Christchurch, and other Canterbury towns. I had another agenda on this trip aside from the historic sights, although we still took in a good chunk of these. The old mines, like Millerton north of Westport and Karamea, were entrancing places.

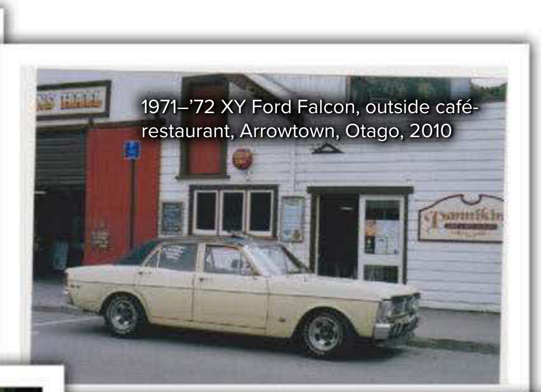
I had a serious hunger, though – OK, you could probably call it an obsession – for visiting book and magazine exchanges up and down the country. At the time, they were everywhere. Now there are hardly any left. They were a great place to find old motoring magazines and, particularly, old New Zealand motor racing mags, which I was on a hardcore quest to find.

Join us in Issue No. 403 of New Zealand Classic Car *when Gerard completes his intrepid travels in the South Island – Ed.* ■

Old derelict train carriage near Picton, 1987



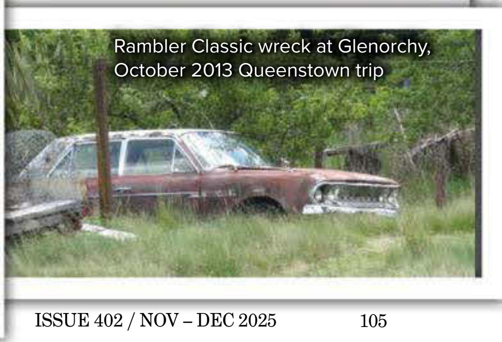
Wreck of a '30s Ford V8 sedan in Bannockburn backblocks, Central Otago, 1987



1971–'72 XY Ford Falcon, outside café-restaurant, Arrowtown, Otago, 2010

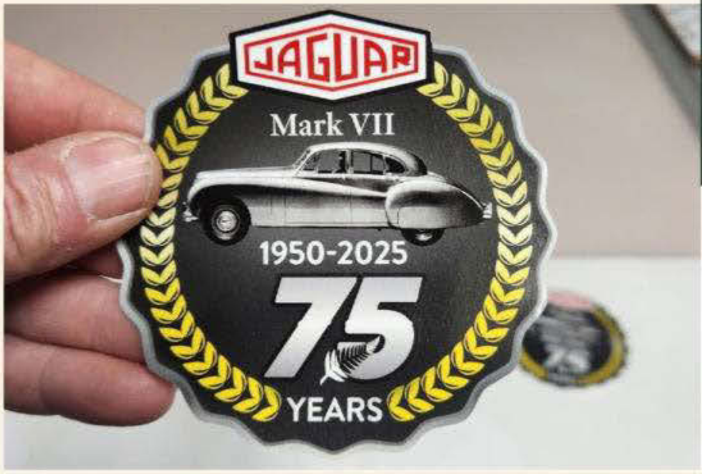
Plymouth Cranbrook, Governor's Bay, Lyttelton, road trip, March 2025

Plymouth Cranbrook, Governor's Bay, Lyttelton, road trip March 2025



Rambler Classic wreck at Glenorchy, October 2013 Queenstown trip

JAGUAR Special
BRUCE BARTON AUTOMOTIVE
51



JAGUAR MARK VII–XI RALLY

It's been a busy time for the Rev Dr Waugh and his team, with a good turnout of big Jaguars (abridged)

The Rev Dr Richard Waugh and his team have been working away at organising the Jaguar MkVII–XI rally in Christchurch, starting 1 November. His latest letter also includes details and prices for the Jaguar book

Hi Quinton,

Just checking in about progress for the national Mark VII–IX event.

Everything is coming together well. See a window decal we have developed (attached), and we are currently working on a draft book promo page.

You may have seen a YouTube video one of our supporters has put together, using surplus photos we didn't use in the new Jaguar book: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhZSY-Ypjjw

It looks like we will have about 20 Mark VII–IX cars present, and from around NZ. From my reading, this could even be a (recent) world record, as the most I have read about is the 15–20 cars at the annual German/European flagship saloon gatherings.

We now have about 100 people confirmed for the dinner at the Cashmere Club, and are likely to pick up more over the coming weeks.

By the way, the book is currently being printed in Hong Kong, and we are expecting copies about mid-October; most in soft cover form, but a limited number in hard cover and in a presentation box.

We have competitively priced the soft cover at $45 and the hard cover at $60, which is good value for a NZ book of A4 size, 164 pages, 70,000-plus words, and 300 photos/illustrations. Been a mammoth effort but another good contribution to NZ motoring history and with wider international relevance too.

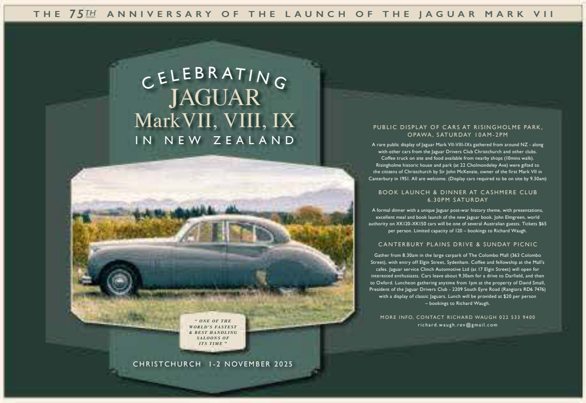
Thank you again for your interest and support.

Kind regards,
Richard

This looks like a great event and a chance to see up close some of these great saloons that helped establish Jaguar's reputation.

One of these cars turned up at the recent Brooklands Classic Racing meeting at Levels. The very tidy metallic burgundy car is not registered for the Christchurch rally.

Richard knows a little of its history, and he would like the owner to contact him **– Ed.**


THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAUNCH OF THE JAGUAR MARK VII

CELEBRATING
JAGUAR
Mark VII, VIII, IX
IN NEW ZEALAND

"ONE OF THE WORLD'S FASTEST & BEST HANDLING SALOONS OF ITS TIME"

CHRISTCHURCH 1-2 NOVEMBER 2025

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF CARS AT RISINGHOLME PARK, OPAWA, SATURDAY 10AM-2PM

A rare public display of Jaguar Mark VII-VIII-IXs gathered from around NZ - along with other cars from the Jaguar Drivers Club Christchurch and other clubs. Coffee truck on site and food available from nearby shops (10mins walk). Risingholme historic house and park (at 22 Cholmondeley Ave) were gifted to the citizens of Christchurch by Sir John McKenzie, owner of the first Mark VII in Canterbury in 1951. All are welcome. (Display cars required to be on site by 9.30am)

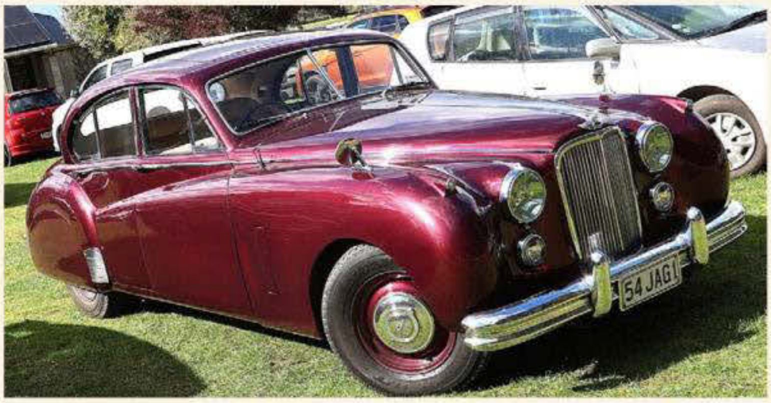
BOOK LAUNCH & DINNER AT CASHMERE CLUB 6.30PM SATURDAY

A formal dinner with a unique Jaguar post-war history theme, with presentations, excellent meal and book launch of the new Jaguar book. John Elmgreen, world authority on XK120-XK150 cars will be one of several Australian guests. Tickets $65 per person. Limited capacity of 120 – bookings to Richard Waugh.

CANTERBURY PLAINS DRIVE & SUNDAY PICNIC

Gather from 8.30am in the large carpark of The Colombo Mall (363 Colombo Street), with entry off Elgin Street, Sydenham. Coffee and fellowship at the Mall's cafes. Jaguar service Clinch Automotive Ltd (at 17 Elgin Street) will open for interested enthusiasts. Cars leave about 9.30am for a drive to Darfield, and then to Oxford. Luncheon gathering anytime from 1pm at the property of David Small, President of the Jaguar Drivers Club - 2209 South Eyre Road (Rangiora RD6 7476) with a display of classic Jaguars. Lunch will be provided at $20 per person – bookings to Richard Waugh.

MORE INFO, CONTACT RICHARD WAUGH 022 533 9400
richard.waugh.rev@gmail.com

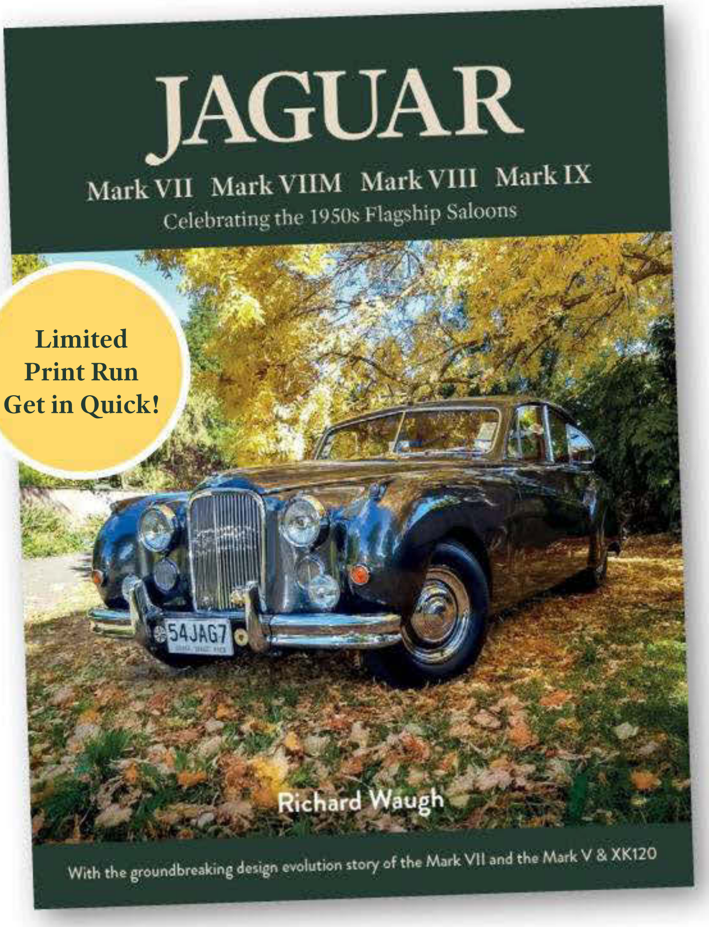


Anyone know the owner of this Mark VII?

NEW KIWI JAGUAR BOOK

"I commend this book to anyone interested in the history of Jaguar. Especially significant is the remarkable unravelling of the design sequence of the Mark VII and its cousins the Mark V and XK120. It is the most important new international Jaguar saloon book for many years."

World Jaguar authority Paul Skilleter (UK)



JAGUAR
Mark VII Mark VIIM Mark VIII Mark IX
Celebrating the 1950s Flagship Saloons
Richard Waugh
With the groundbreaking design evolution story of the Mark VII and the Mark V & XK120

Limited Print Run Get in Quick!

The Mark VII was the car that made Jaguar

- The flagship Jaguars were the fastest and best handling of all NZ saloon cars of their time.
- The Mark VII is now recognised as one of the significant automotive designs and one of the most influential Jaguar cars of the 20th Century.
- With accounts of rallying and racing successes (overseas and NZ), including an outright win of the Monte Carlo Rally.
- Includes technical detail and profile of the XK twin-cam six-cylinder engine designed for the Mark VII – one of the world's greatest engines.
- Has indepth design analysis of the Mark VII and Mark V/XK120 cars – with groundbreaking research, including that the Mark VII was a key influence on the XK120 design (and not the other way round!).
- Over 50 Kiwi cars profiled.

JAGUAR

Mark VII Mark VIIM Mark VIII Mark IX

Celebrating the 1950s Flagship Saloons

Richard Waugh

RRP: $45 soft cover/$60 hard cover
ISBN: 9780473749361
Publishing date: Late October 2025
Format: 210 x 280 mm, Portrait, Paperback, 165 pages, 300 photographs/illustrations

FOR NZ CLASSIC CAR READERS

Paperback Pre-Publication Offer $40

plus $10 shipping within New Zealand

Limited-Edition Hard Cover in Presentation Box Special Offer $50

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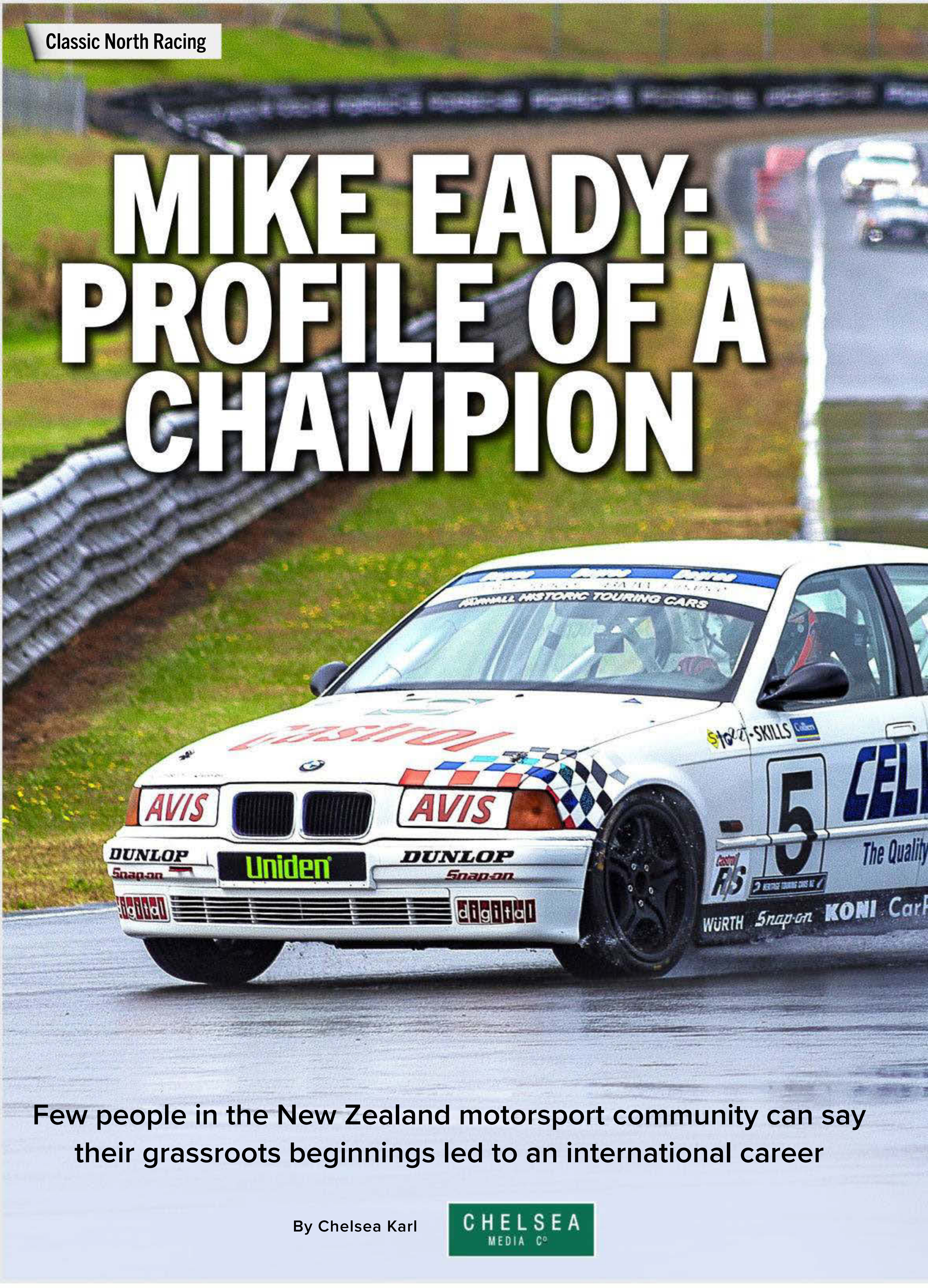
Include your book selection and shipping address, along with the code **NZCC**. We will then send you payment instructions.

For a quick and easy way to email us, simply scan the QR code with your phone. It will automatically open a new message for you.

About the Author Richard Waugh

Well-known motoring and aviation author follows on from his very successful 2021 'Classic Jaguars in New Zealand' book. Richard has been greatly assisted by many Jaguar enthusiasts, especially Grant McMillan of Auckland. For the 75th anniversary of the launch of the Jaguar Mark VII Richard turns his attention to one of the most important Jaguar designs of the 20th Century.


HISTORIC TOURING CARS
Castrol
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DUNLOP
DUNLOP
Snap-on
Snap-on
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digital
digital
SKILLS
5
The Quality
WÜRTH
Snap-on
KONI

MIKE EADY: PROFILE OF A CHAMPION

Few people in the New Zealand motorsport community can say their grassroots beginnings led to an international career

By Chelsea Karl

CHELSEA
MEDIA Co

Riley
Eady
007
GOLDENEYE
LNET
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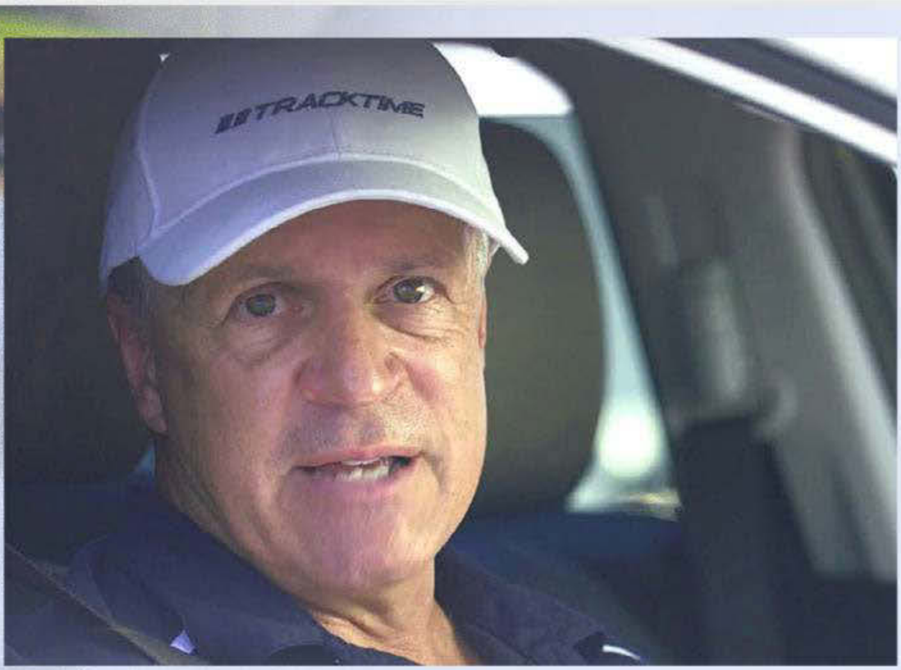

Mike Eady followed his passion for motor racing across the globe, from cementing his name in the Nürburgring Hall of Fame to touring the world as a BMW International driver trainer. Eady's story is as rich as that of his acclaimed 1995 BMW 320i, which is currently raced among the Heritage Touring Cars during the New Zealand motorsport season.

A PASSION FOR RACING

The Eady name is more synonymous with classical music than it is with classic cars; however, after four generations, Mike decided to change his tune rather than follow the family business.

"I wanted to be a racing driver, so I was like the black sheep." From the age of 15, he was borrowing his dad's car and driving himself to the kart track, relying on assistance from other competitors to show him the ropes.

Equipped with a shoestring budget and a dream, Eady set out to secure sponsorship to make it possible. At 19, Eady was inspired by a magazine advert to move overseas and compete at the Winfield Racing School for a chance to win a paid drive in the Formula 3000.

FRENCH CONNECTION

Eady was the first Kiwi to enrol in the French racing school, competing alongside legends Alain Menu and Damon Hill. He won the first three rounds and a top-10 placing, but during a required one-week break, Greenpeace's *Rainbow Warrior* was bombed in Auckland Harbour.

Unaware of this, Eady's helmet, featuring a Kiwi, received disapproving looks when the competition resumed. The political fallout affected sponsorships, and he was forced to race a heavily damaged car, preventing him from finishing the final race of 1985. Menu claimed victory.

HOME TO TOURING CARS

Eady returned to New Zealand wiser about the political influences in motorsport. He quickly realised that he needed more funding to race here and swapped from Formula V (Formula First) to a Toyota Corolla, entered in the Wellington Street Races. The larger vehicle meant room for more sponsors' signwriting. The Corolla was later leased to the New Zealand Touring Cars and went on to win every race of the subsequent season.

It was during the New Zealand Touring Car Series in 1995 that Eady began racing against the BMW International Motorsport Team, headed by Craig Baird and Brent Riley. Baird drove the first four-door, E36 320i car built for the series, named the 'IMS-01', which was later driven by Riley once the 'IMS-02' was completed.

The pair dominated the series for six years and won every championship. Baird eventually left the team, and young Jason Richards took over the second car, winning his respective series. Eady has fond memories of a friendly rivalry between the drivers, and the sportsmanship of his childhood legends left a lasting impression.

"I had [Riley's] autograph as a kid. For me to be in his race was a thrill to me."

CHAMPION SUCCESS AT THE 'RING

Eady battled his heroes and won the

"I WANTED TO BE A RACING DRIVER, SO I WAS LIKE THE BLACK SHEEP"

1998 New Zealand 1600 Touring Car title, but didn't receive any acknowledgement of victory from event organisers. He was instead gifted a bottle of champagne by Riley in the pits. Following his championship win, Eady's international career continued in 1999, when Craig Baird invited him to try for a drive in South Africa.

He and Lyall Williamson discussed the driver position, but financial support was again his weak point. Eady had $35K in sponsorship from Phillips Car Audio; however, he needed $70K plus surplus for damages to secure the seat. He was given 10 days to fundraise but couldn't meet the quota, and another driver took his place.

Eady soon found another international competition and took a New Zealand team to Germany and the Nürburgring 24 Hours race. They started with a Peugeot 106 tiny car, and after besting the rival VW Polo in a fierce two-hour battle, he was offered a seat with the semi-factory team. After winning the next 24-hour race with the Polo, Eady drove Greg Taylor's Honda Civic Type-R with Tim Martin and Johnny McIntyre, and the dream team cleaned up the 'Ring for five consecutive years!

TAXI! TO THE 'RING PLEASE!

During his home visits, Eady embellished his resume with the New Zealand Porsche GT3 Championship in 2004.

"To win a New Zealand championship is not easy," Eady says, however, he did just that.

He also won the North Island Endurance Championship in 2011, while driving in a BMW M3 V8.

These impressive achievements led to a discussion with one of the 'Ring's Taxi drivers, who was also a BMW driver trainer, retained by the track owners, providing hot laps around the Nürburgring circuit.

"He almost fell over when I told him [seven races, five wins], he couldn't believe it because I was a Kiwi. He nearly choked on his beer and fell off his chair," Eady says.

Blown away by his track record, Eady accepted training at the BMW instructor academy in 2006. The relationship continued with BMW New Zealand for 14 years. While the local driver market slowly dried up, Eady had the chance to travel the world a few times a year for international driver events: "I did over 1000 laps around the Abu Dhabi circuit in three weeks and got paid to do it!"

NOT ALWAYS PLAIN SAILING!

Like anyone with a career in motorsport, Eady experienced his share of 'brown pants' moments, including a 'big mistake' during one of the Nürburgring 24-hour races.

"I came over the blind crest, which in our car was flat, at about 160kph into a big sweeping right-hand corner. I came over 100kph faster than I should have, basically straight into the corner of a flatbed truck!" he recalls.

He narrowly avoided a head-on collision and escaped with only a broken wing mirror and a grazed panel to show for it.

While the competition got faster, the fun disappeared for the slower models, and after a time, Eady noticed he was participating in survival racing.

"All you did was check your wing mirrors and surrender corners to the

"WITH TIM MARTIN AND JOHNNY MCINTYRE, AND THE DREAM TEAM CLEANED UP THE 'RING FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS!"

others. After a while, you wouldn't drive a lap on the line at all."

Home again, he travelled to Christchurch and found himself in Steven Kelly's garage, looking at a vehicle.

"He pulled the cover off, and it was exactly the car I sat in 40 years ago, down to every single sticker. Ironically, the price was still $70K, but owning the car now is very rewarding and good," Eady says.

A FAMILIAR BMW

The BMW 320i was promptly purchased and shipped north to Hampton Downs, where Eady could fully experience the mechanical averageness of a stock car from the '90s: "It was the most disappointing drive of my entire life!"

Over the next four years, the kinks were smoothed out of the cleverly built car, restoring it almost as it was raced in the '90s.

"The rules require the cars to run with a lot of standard parts from back in the day, so the car looks like a BMW Super Tourer but is much slower," he explains.

Eady had to adapt his endurance racing style to suit the aggressive handling needed to race the car well: "Everything has to be perfect to get a good lap time, and if you make one little mistake … you're gone. My challenge is to keep up with the other historic touring cars. I always think I should be in the top 10!"

His champion's mentality inspired him to continuously pick the best lines and heel–toe perfectly.

"You can see at Taupō," he says. "The car, when driven well, is very fast around the corners but runs out of speed down the straights. But it's still quite competitive, even today."

Unlocking the best performance of the car also came from the cherished memories that Kiwis unanimously shared of the car: "People who share their stories know more about it than I do." He felt responsible for living up to the fondness. Previously raced by Baird and Riley, the first professional team to race in the country, made the car a piece of New Zealand racing history.

PASSING ON SKILLS – TRACKTIME ACADEMY

Between classic car races, Eady dedicates his time to running TrackTime Academy, driver training for all ages, and helping improve safety on the road. Sponsored by Mazda NZ, trainees are put behind the wheel of a CX-5 (track) or MX-5 (skid) and taught simple things, greatly enhancing their practical driving skills. He has a network of top-level drivers, including Thomas Alexander and Hugo Allan, assisting with taking the driver training programme around the country.

Similar driver training programs are run by Greg Murphy and Tony Quinn, who all share the belief that the current state of the New Zealand driver licensing system is only setting up young drivers to fail. It's no secret that our country has challenging roads, and there is a big incentive to reduce our road toll.

Nowadays, Eady enjoys spending time off the tarmac, whether it's walking the dog, paddleboarding, or spending time with the kids. It's time for the next generation to pick up the skills and have some fun. ■

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KEEPING PRE-'60S CLASSICS ALIVE AND LEGAL

Craftsmanship, compliance, and classic passion under one roof

For nearly eight years, Franklin Speed Shop has been quietly earning a reputation as one of New Zealand's go-to destinations for lovers of pre-1960s vehicles. Specialising in traditional hot rods and classic cars, the workshop has become synonymous with quality craftsmanship, attention to detail, and a genuine passion for motoring history.

From custom fabrication and bodywork to meticulous maintenance and repair, every car that rolls into Franklin Speed Shop is treated like a work of art – and a piece of history. The team's deep respect for vintage engineering shines through in every weld, panel, and polish.

And now, they're going a step further. Starting at the end of this month, Franklin Speed Shop will be offering full Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA) certification for pre-'60s vehicles, providing enthusiasts with a convenient, trusted option for getting their pride and joy road legal. Whether it's a home-built hot rod or a carefully restored classic, getting compliant just got easier.

Franklin Speed Shop is more than a workshop – it's a place where old-school motoring lives on, and where each build is as personal as it is professional.

Got a project that needs a touch of traditional craftsmanship or compliance expertise to get it on the road?

Call 027 278 9821 and let Franklin Speed Shop bring your vintage dream to life. ■

1974 JENSEN INTERCEPTOR III

7.2 Litre V8 (440cu)
NZ new, 32,050km

$174,990

A rare opportunity to own a genuine New Zealand-new example of the iconic Jensen Interceptor III, one of the most charismatic grand tourers of the 1970s.
Hallmark wraparound rear glass hatch, opulent leather interior, and a commanding road stance.
One of the great V8 GT cars of its time.

$2,250,000

2020 BRABHAM BT62

5.4 V8 NA 700hp, competition track car, 6 speed Holinger, Pneumatic Shift. Just 4,500km, as raced by Shane Van Gisbergen in the six hour endurance race at Highlands.

$99,990

2013 ASTON MARTIN VANTAGE

2nd Gen 4.7 Litre V8 coupe, only 49,500km, Speedshift II gearbox, new front pads and rotors, new battery, freshly complied and serviced with 12 month WOF.

$599,990

1955 JAGUAR D-TYPE

NZ new, just 1,480km, 5 speed manual, powered by a finely tuned 4.2 litre Jaguar Straight Six DOHC engine putting out circa 300hp coupled to a 5 speed Borg-Warner gearbox.

$45,990

2016 MERCEDES-BENZ C63

4.0 Litre V8 Twin Turbo, 108,500km, NZ nav with bluetooth and an amazing Burmester Sound System, 0-100kmph 3.6 seconds, Nine Airbags, Distronic plus, Collision prevention assist plus.

$49,990

1971 FORD MUSTANG

NZ New 5.0 Litre V8 Fastback Coupe, 125,850km, dual exhausts, deep-dish steering wheel, twin-gauge cluster. Recently serviced, strong-running, and full of character. Don't miss out!

$49,990

1987 PORSCHE 928 S4

5.0 V8 6 Speed Manual, a captivating blend of power and sophistication, combining classic Porsche design with muscular performance, luxurious leather seating.

$54,990

2014 JAGUAR F-TYPE

3.0 V6 Supercharged Coupe, 8 Speed Paddleshift, just 48,500km, beautiful example in Ammonite Grey, 340hp at your right foot! Sumptuous half leather/half suede interior with dual climate.

$159,990

1969 JENSEN INTERCEPTOR II

6.3 Litre V8 coupe. Combines timeless Italian styling by Carrozzeria Touring with raw V8 power and luxury refinements. One of only nine known in NZ. Finished in 2005 Monaco Red.

$129,990

1987 FERRARI 328 GTS

Just 35,175km, an icon of the eighties, The mid-mounted 3.2-litre V8 delivers 270hp through the iconic gated 5-speed manual, contact us to arrange a private viewing or test drive.

$239,990

2019 MERCEDES-BENZ AMG GTR

NZ new, only 23,150km, 4.0-litre twin-turbo V8 producing 430kW (577hp) and 700Nm, sent to the rear wheels through a lightning-quick 7-speed dual-clutch transmission. Truly visceral experience.

$169,990

2007 LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO SPYDER

5.0 Litre V10, 4WD, 500hp, E-Gear, Front lift kit, custom paint in 'Gulf' blue, be quick! Electric roof, comprehensive service history, no expense spared.

$41,990

2012 MASERATI GRAN TURISMO

NZ new 4.2 Litre V8, 6 Speed ZF Auto, gloss black with tan leather, electric seats, dual zone climate control, Beautifully presented in the best colour combo! 100,000km.

$79,990

2012 MASERATI GRAN TURISMO

NZ new, 4.7 Litre V8 Martini Coupe, just 42,000km, looks fabulous with Martini Livery, Aftermarket exhaust system means you will hear this car coming before you see it.

$99,990

1971 FORD CAPRI

Ford 5.0 Litre 302 Windsor, Tremec T50, five-speed manual. 90,990km, heads: Alloy Edelbrock RPM Performer, carb: Barry Grant Speed Demon 650, intake manifold: Edelbrock RPM Performer.

$49,990

2006 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT

Just 61,850km, legendary 6.0-litre twin-turbo W12, delivering smooth, relentless power to all four wheels through its seamless automatic transmission.

$159,990

1997 DODGE VIPER GTS COUPE

6 speed manual, 8.0L V10, super low km's - 44,500 miles, amazing condition, 2nd Gen Viper are becoming collectable – beats money in the bank! Be the coolest car on the road!

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ALL ADRIAN WANTED WAS A CLASSIC A40 RACING CAR

NOW HE HAS TWO – ONE HISTORIC SALOON AND A CLASSIC A40 FARINA RACING CAR

By Quinton Taylor, photography supplied

The past season has produced many classic racing cars, some 'new' and some that have been languishing in storage for years

Adrian Robertson was destined to be involved in motorsport sooner or later. From the age of six, he attended annual premier motorsport events at Teretonga Park with his family in the mid '60s. When Adrian saw the first 'bread van' Ford Anglia, and Austin A40 Farinas chasing after the Mustangs and Minis, he was hooked!

GOOD THINGS TAKE TIME

Fast-forward to Adrian's age of about 18, when the original 'Fordina' body shell was for sale in his hometown. Sitting on the garage floor, the completely bare body shell sat looking very unloved; even the trademark nose cone was missing.

It was a mission well beyond Adrian's resources, and it was going to take time to achieve his ambition. To remain involved in the sport, Adrian then volunteered at Teretonga, initially as a first responder, and later moving into car recovery.

TIMELY CONTACT

In a chance conversation with Bruce Dyer from the MotorSport New Zealand (MSNZ) Historic Advisory Commission at the 2023 George Begg event at Teretonga, they discussed how Adrian would like to own a classic A40 racing saloon.

Some months later Adrian received a phone call from Bruce about an old all-comer saloon that was for sale. Adrian was particularly interested when it turned out to be the ex–Tony Marsh / Wayne Calnan Ford-powered A40 Farina, and so Adrian became the proud custodian of this historic A40, the red and white car in the photos. Adrian has plans, as he explains: "It will be rebuilt to racing condition, but I intend to only panel and tidy up the exterior. I intend to preserve the original exterior patina with its signwriting just as it was raced back in the day."

While collecting another very rusty A40 Farina for spare parts, etc., for the all-comer saloon, Adrian came across a Facebook Marketplace advert placed by Scott Whitaker, who was rebuilding his late father's roadworthy A40 Farina.

CHANCE ENCOUNTER

Knowing how hard Farina parts are to find, Adrian contacted Scott and offered him any parts he needed to finish his A40. When Scott visited Adrian to assess what he might be able to use, his interest was piqued by Adrian's Speedwell-equipped racing A30. After a very long conversation and some arm-twisting, Scott managed to procure the A30 once he sweetened the offer with his A40 classic race car. The Austin A40 Farina was first built by Phil Parks in about 2012. Phil raced it at Ruapuna and a few hill-climbs, and he last raced it in about 2014. It is the yellow and white car in the accompanying photographs.

The A40 changed hands a few times, ending up with Alan Taylor, who then tidied it, painted it yellow and white, and raced it at Ruapuna regularly until 2019.

"I got my hands on the A40 in June 2024," says Adrian. "I started at the tail-lights and finished at the headlights. There was nothing wrong with the A40, but as is the case with anyone who buys a ready-built race car, the new owner just has to change things and improve things."

PERIOD MODS

The A40 contains all period-correct modifications that would have been included back in the '60s and is powered by a very well-modified Austin Marina 1300cc engine.

"The motor is balanced, and it has all the necessary bits to help it stay together at the red line of 7000rpm," Adrian says. "The block has been fire-ringed to help stop the old Marina trick of blowing head gaskets. The motor has a rather long intake manifold with a 45mm Weber side-draught carburettor, plus the rather large extractors that will be replaced with an LCB [long centre branch] set-up, to gain that little bit more horsepower."

The gearbox used is a close-ratio, crosscut gear, Austin-Healey Sprite gearbox. Solid preparation continues with a 'Mig Craft' locked 3.9-ratio Sprite differential. Braking is taken care of by the normal period-correct brake modifications of Sprite front discs and

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CAR PAINTERS
PANELBEATERS
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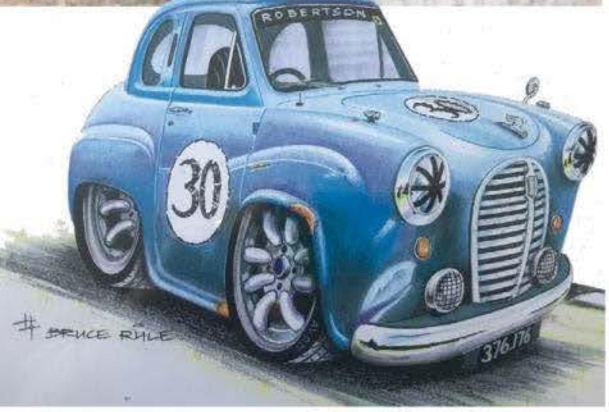
ROBERTSON
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BRUCE RULE

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TAYLOR AUTO

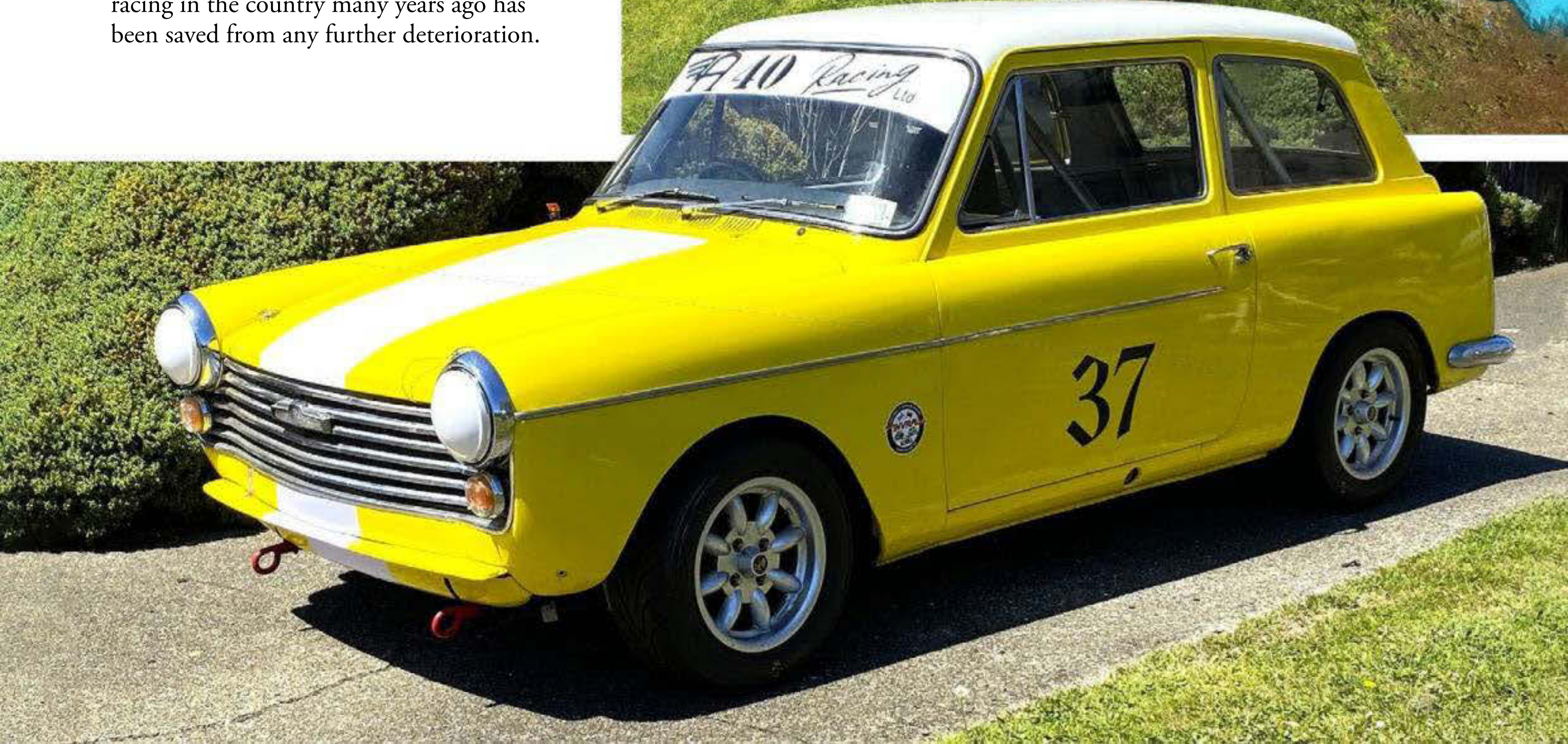
THE MOTOR HAS A RATHER LONG INTAKE MANIFOLD WITH A 45MM WEBER SIDE-DRAUGHT CARBURETTOR

genuine Minifin alloy rear brake drums. The front suspension has 600-pound (272kg) springs and modified factory-style knee-action shock absorbers.

Ex–New Zealand Open Saloon Car Association (OSCA) racer and racing car builder Ralph Mosman has helped Adrian immensely with the sway bar set-up, as the old-school style double sway bars are now fully adjustable.

Adrian plans to race his yellow and white A40 wherever he can, from joining the ever-popular Historic and Vintage Racing Association (HVRA).

One of the very first OSCA saloons racing in the country many years ago has been saved from any further deterioration.


A40 Racing Ltd
37

BROOKLANDS MEMBERS MEETING

CLASSIC MOTOR RACING CLUB HONOURS THE RACING CHARGERS

By Quinton Taylor, photography by Quinton Taylor

It's 50 years since Chrysler Chargers took the first three places at the 1975 Glenvale 200. Many of those historic race winners and other rare Chargers gathered at Levels Raceway in September to celebrate a special part of Australasian motor racing history

The 2025 Southern Classic, held on Saturday, 13 September at Levels (Timaru International Motor Raceway) in Timaru, kicked off the motor racing season with the biggest Historic and Vintage Racing Association (HVRA) entry seen to date in the south. Free spectator entry attracted a substantial crowd, which was entertained with some great displays from both racing saloons and CAMS motorcycle racers, the two codes rarely seen together in New Zealand.

A remarkable 37 members of the Pre 78 Classic Saloons formed their biggest turnout to date, along with a very healthy contingent of HVRA racers visiting from the North Island, auguring well for the new season.

RACING CHARGERS

Chargers arrived for the static public display in the car park along with some of their well-known drivers from the era such as Gary Sprague, Jim Little, Patrick Monaghan, John Christie, and Leo Leonard.

Mark Burrows took to the track in the Pre 78 class, with his Charger, the same track where the car debuted in 1986. The ex–Jim Little car was built for the South Island Production Series racing until an age qualification limit curtailed its production racing in the mid 1980s. The car was later passed to Jim's sponsor, Peter Hanson, who raced in club and classic events and was often driven by Jim.

NEW PRE 78 CLASSIC SALOONS MEMBER

Jason Lambert had a ball the first time out in the Pre 78 class with his Ford Mustang. The former 2K Cup racer swapped his Toyota for the big '66 V8, one of a limited number of V8-powered cars eligible for the class. Jason looks forward to some enjoyable racing.

"It's been a long journey, and looking

GLENVALE 20
Winner
Gary SPRAGUE

back at what I've achieved, just to get to the start line alone has been worth the experience. I'm looking forward to many laps of sporting competition with all of the Pre 78 competitors. And getting to know you all around the pits," he said.

Eric Swinbourn arrived to race with a diminutive 1976 Suzuki SC100 CX-G, debuting in the 0–1200cc class.

"We've just driven this off the trailer, and that's as far as I have driven it," Eric said. "I haven't a clue if we have the brakes set correctly, or if the suspension is right for here. It's also a tight squeeze with a helmet on, but here goes."

It must have been all good as he won the class!

JUST A NUDGE

Pre 78 Classic Saloons coordinator Wayne Perkins discovered the clutch on his Chevrolet Camaro was suspect in qualifying and nursed it off the line in the first race, only to spin into the tyre wall at turn two.

"In the last 40-odd years of motor racing, I have only caused panel damage to my race cars twice through my own fault or lack of talent," he said.

Fortunately, only minor damage was done to the rear.

"As you can imagine, I was a little grumpy with myself when I backed the Camaro into the tyre wall at speed on turn two at Levels last Saturday to rack up my third hit; however, it does appear that I'm getting better at crashing with minimal damage," he said.

Despite the mishap, he relished the great day's racing. ■

CAMARO
INDIANAPOLIS 500

1982–1992 THIRD-GENERATION CHEVROLET CAMARO

It's hard to think of the good old American muscle car and not think of the Camaro

By Ben Selby, photography by Ben Selby and *NZCC* archives

What began as the bowtie emblem of Chevrolet's answer to the Mustang in 1967 has become one of GM's most celebrated and coveted cars, with each generation having its share of fans.

THIRD GENERATION AGES WELL

One generation of Camaro undergoing something of a renaissance in recent years is the third – cars built from 1982 to 1992. Despite being criticised in the past for being a tad down on power and lacking some of the stylistic appeal of the earlier cars, this hero car of the 1980s still has a ton of presence, which is improving with age.

Ask the members of Team Third-Generation Camaros and Firebirds of New Zealand and see why the third generation deserves its place among the pantheon of iconic muscle cars.

"It's a great continuation of the whole Camaro concept," says founding member Steve Kirton.

ONLINE LINKS

The Facebook group's origins can be traced back to a chance meeting between Camaro owners Steve and Ron Rogers at the Kustoms Breakfast Car gathering at McLeans Island in Christchurch.

"Steve saw my third-gen Camaro, knocked on my window, and the first thing he asked me was if I would like to start a group," remembers Ron.

"The third-generation Camaro was a radical departure from what had come before. "It's become a timeless design; I think it's such a good-looking car," says Ron.

TECHNICAL UPGRADES

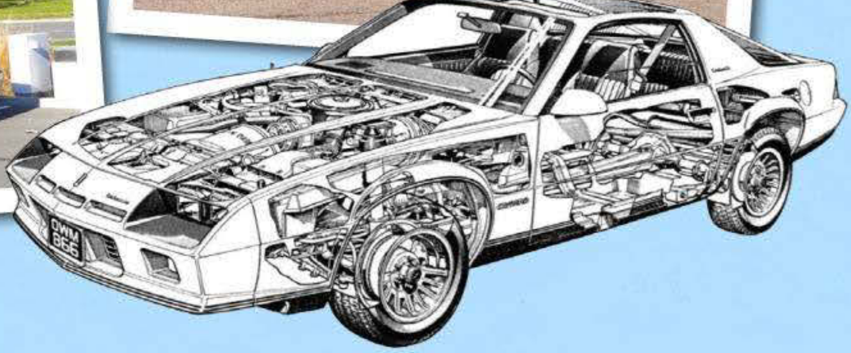
Much like its Corvette sibling, this Camaro was the most advanced yet when it came to technology. Its F-body underpinnings meant it sported a shorter wheelbase with a new coil spring suspension, and it was a lot lighter, thanks to many plastic components.

It was practical too, with folding rear seats and a rear hatch window, making the third-generation cars the first Camaro with a hatchback. The third generation also saw the first full convertible offered since 1969.

BIGGER BANGS

Chevrolet offered a wide range of engine choices for the Camaro throughout its decade-long production run, from the earliest four-cylinder and V6 engine cars to the later 5.0- and 5.7-litre V8 offerings for the likes of the Z28, though, as mentioned previously, they were down a bit on power compared with the previous generation with even the gruntiest of eight-cylinder power

81
Jean Charles
USA



plants, the L98 producing 230bhp on the later cars, which was 10bhp less than the Corvettes of the era.

"When they did the second generation, they had engines like a 350hp 350ci V8, then the emission regulations happened, along with insurance costs, etc., and GM had to throttle back on performance," says Ron.

Despite this, time has been kind to the third-gen Camaro, with models like the RS, Z28, and immensely coveted IROC-Z, built to commemorate Camaro's success in the International Race of Champions series, starting to become very collectable.

PRICES HEADING UP

As a result, prices are rising across the board for well-sorted tidy examples.

"I reckon prices have gone up about 25 per cent for a good one," says Steve. "Of course, you pay for what you get. You could pick one up for NZ$15K, but you will probably spend more getting it up to standard. There have been two in the last few months which have gone for more than NZ$35K."

Says Ron, "I bought mine 10 years ago with a budget of NZ$20K, and I don't think the price has dropped that much. I reckon NZ$25K would get you a good one. It does depend on what you are after and what you are willing to spend. If you want a third-gen Camaro, you will take the best version you can find at the time, though it seems today a good IROC-Z Camaro is worth up to three times more than the equivalent Corvette in the States."

JAPANESE ORIGINS

Many of the third-gen cars on New Zealand roads have been imported from the Japanese market.

"These Camaros were built in GM's Van Nuys plant, exported to Japan and imported to New Zealand," says Ron. "Cars that come out of Japan are generally pretty good. You can spot these imports as their headlights dip to the left, whereas the American-built cars dip to the right. Some cars featured throttle body injection or tuned port injection, and VATS, or 'Vehicle Anti-Theft System', where each ignition key has a resistor unique to the car."

MAKE THE USUAL CHECKS

Take extra care when buying. "Make sure the speedometer hasn't been clocked, and if the top of the dashboard is cracked, this can be repaired. As this was the start of the electronic era, keep an eye on the electrics," says Ron, "My 1989 car is one of the later-built cars with an onboard diagnostic system, which gives you a fault code if something is wrong. You can then diagnose the fault by checking the service manual," he says.

While you will need to hunt around online for some parts, there is no shortage of specialists locally and stateside. Plus, you also have passionate groups like Team Third Gen to put you in the right direction when it comes to cars and spares.

"I buy parts from the States and pick up the odd thing here too," says Ron.

BEST PICK – A CARED-FOR CAR

Steve reckons if they have been looked after, a good Camaro should be mechanically trouble-free.

"While some parts are getting hard to come by, it's still a Camaro at the end of the day. The 350ci V8 is one of the most reliable motors in the world," says Steve.

Based on this, those who love '80s nostalgia and some good analogue muscle car fun for a relatively small amount of dosh can't go wrong with this ever-appreciating modern classic. They both agree, "You can own an '80s muscle car for not a lot of money and not break the bank."

Plus, based on current trends, a tidy and well-looked-after third-generation Chevrolet Camaro could stack up as a decent investment for the near future! ■

HONOURING THE PAST

Part 1

STACY LINES' STUNNING REPLICA PDL MINI

In the 1960s, motor racing in New Zealand saw the rise of the highly entertaining Mini Coopers. The distinctive red PDL Minis foreshadowed even greater achievements for the popular racing team and made a lasting impact on the local motor racing scene

By Josh Kelly, photography by Josh Kelly, Stacy Lines, PDL Stewart collection and *New Zealand Classic Car* archives

40
ERIC JOHNSON
PHIL WILLIAMS
40
PDL
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PDL was once a household name, an electrical products company founded in Christchurch in 1937. It became synonymous with New Zealand motorsport due to its sponsorship of numerous race cars over the years. The most well known are the two iconic Mustangs run by PDL Racing, but well before these, there were two Mini Coopers raced by Robertson Stewart and Clyde Collins.

PDL MINI HISTORY

Robert initially purchased the well-known Minisprint from Frank Hamlin to race in the New Zealand Saloon Car Championship. A change to FIA Group 5 regulations following the 1967 season meant that the Minisprint was no longer eligible, and a replacement production-based car had to be sourced.

A standard Mini was purchased, and work began on turning it into the new racer. The shell was fully seam-welded by Robert, and a roll cage was added – a feature that was relatively uncommon in that period. The tubes were brought through to the suspension area of the shell, resulting in a very stiff car.

The 1293cc running gear from the Hamlin Minisprint was carried over to the new car. With Robert being tall, a lot of time was spent bringing the seat and steering as far back as possible. Twin fuel tanks were added to compete in endurance races.

He would even go to the length of converting the car to left-hand drive for the anticlockwise tracks and in the 1968 season, fuelling the opposite side fuel tank to where he would be sitting, to ensure the best weight distribution!

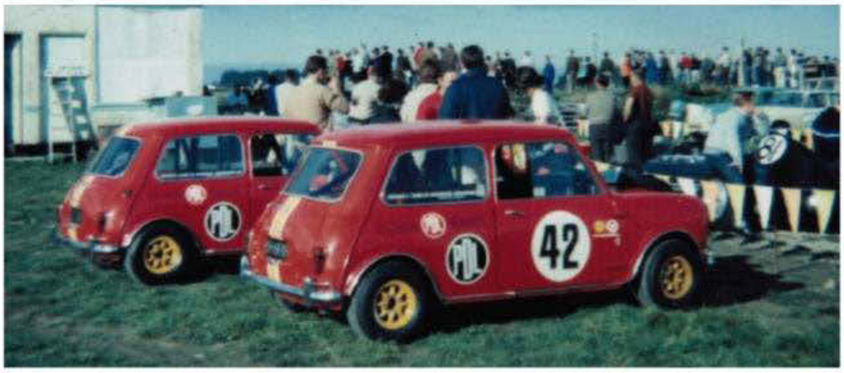
SEEING DOUBLE

Robert's car was built to contest in the 1001–1300cc class, and a sister car was prepared for Clyde Collins to compete in. Clyde's car was built to the same specifications as Robert's car, except for having a 999cc engine. This was done in the hope that Clyde could be a class winner in the 0–1000cc class and Robert in the larger capacity class. Robert ran the No. 40 while Clyde ran No. 42.

Both cars were well prepared by Eric Johnson and enjoyed plenty of success. At the 1967 Wills Three Hour at Pukekohe, Robert and Clyde came third in the No. 40 car. This would have been a race win had it not been for an error by their lap scorer putting them a lap ahead of where they were, so Robert slowed down, allowing the second- and third-place cars past!

ROBERT'S BEST YEAR!

The 1967–1968 New Zealand Saloon Car Championship proved to be Robert's most successful, with a closely fought battle all season long with Angus Hyslop. Both drivers



shared equal wins in the eight-race series. Robert placed second in three races, but a DNF at Timaru meant that Robert ended up four points behind Hyslop at the end of the season to finish second in the 1001–1300cc class.

IMPROVING THE PACKAGES

For the 1968–1969 season, both cars were updated to Mk2 specification. Due to Mk2 Minis having Hydrolastic suspension, the PDL cars had to be fitted with the same setup to be legal for Group 5.

This caused all sorts of issues for Robert and Clyde, with both men struggling with the new way the cars handled. This was eventually rectified initially by cutting off the Hydrolastic pipes and running the cars on the bump stops before reverting to the original rubber cone suspension set-up.

Jack Knight five-speed gearboxes were installed, but they were found to be hard to shift as well as missing gear shifts, so these were swapped back to the SCCR gearboxes that were originally used.

A crash at Levin in 1969 destroyed Robert's car, and due to business insurance complications, this also ended Robert's racing career. After winning his class that season, Clyde's Mini was put up for sale. It ultimately ended up being destroyed in a crash after it was sold.

A LIFELONG MINI RACING FAN

Stacy Lines is a lifelong Mini fan. Like many Kiwi families, the Minis featured. Stacy's parents and grandparents had them, and his first car was a 1978 Clubman LE 1100. Motorsport has featured too; Stacy's father, Trev, used to race speedway before moving to circuit racing for a period in the early 1990s.

Stacy started on bikes in the early 2000s, competing in motocross, cross-country races, and trail rides. After taking a break from bikes and having a desire to compete in cars,

he started competing in Clubsport at the Southland Sports Car Club around 2014 in a Toyota Corolla. Wishing to race properly, Stacy started in his Lotus 7 replica and then his road-going Mini.

As sports car racing was very limited, he built a Toyota Corolla FX-GT to race instead. Although it was fast and fun, Stacy always wanted a racing Mini, and in 2019, he bought a Mk3 Mini to compete in.

HISTORIC MOTORSPORT RESURGENCE

The resurgence in historic motorsport over the last number of years has seen the formation of various clubs, including the Historic and Vintage Racing Association (HVRA).

The HVRA's primary focus is on representing cars in their period specifications and liveries as per their heyday in the 1960s and 1970s. Stacy has been involved since its inception, and he wanted a car that showcases what HVRA represents.

Unable to afford a genuine period race car outright, an accurate tribute car is the next best thing. Initially, Stacy planned to use the Mk3 Mini but really wanted to build his own car from the ground up and have an early-shell Mini that best represented the period.

Being authentic to the period is critical to Stacy, so the Mk3 was sold to his father, and a Mk1 Mini was sourced to create the new race car.

RECREATING THE PDL DNA

Stacy believes that any tribute car should be one where the original was lost to history to honour the past, and one of these is the Robert Stewart No. 40 PDL Mini.

"The PDL cars were renowned for their preparation and presentation, so that aligned with my way of thinking too. And given Dad was the local PDL sales branch manager when I was a kid, it all made sense. I also only wanted to do a car that was endorsed by the original owner. I reached out to Sir Robert Stewart, got his blessing, so got on with it," he says.

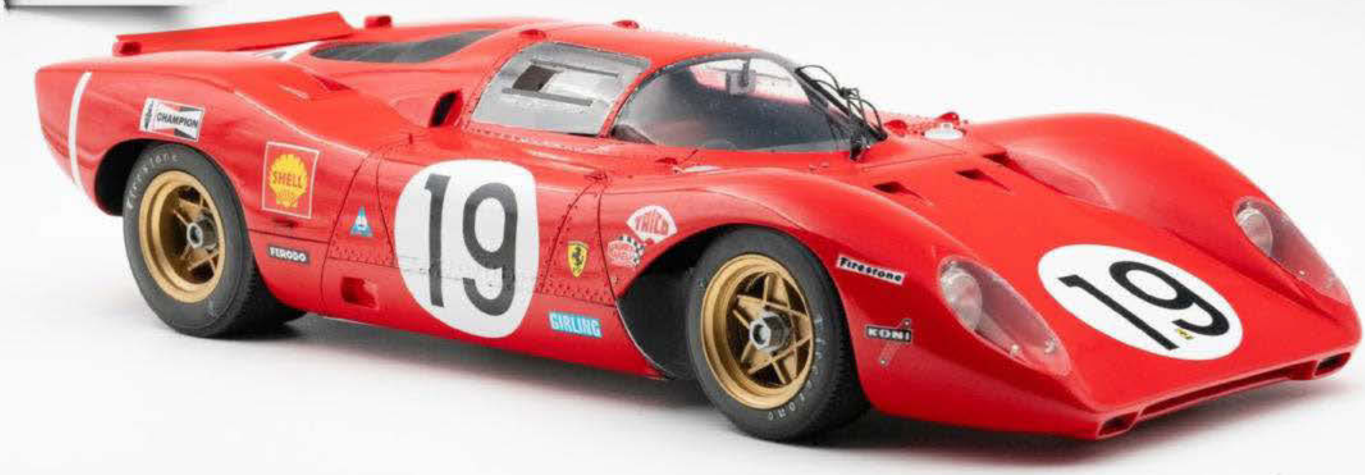
> **"THE PDL CARS WERE RENOWNED FOR THEIR PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION"**

SOURCING THE RIGHT SHELL

The project began in March 2021. The Mk1 Mini that had been purchased had been raced at the Queenstown Street Race in the mid1990s. Unfortunately, while this car was being stripped, it was discovered that it was more bog than steel! This meant another shell had to be sourced, and a second shell was purchased in mid 2022.

After sandblasting, it too was found to be pretty untidy – it had previous accident damage, and it looked like everything from the firewall forward had been replaced. Despite this, Stacy was committed and decided to keep going with this shell. Plenty of brand-new and good second-hand panels were sourced for the restoration.

Join us for the conclusion of Josh's story of this great tribute to the PDL Minis in the next issue of *New Zealand Classic Car*, No. 403 – Ed. ∎



By Aaron Mai, photography by Aaron Mai

UNSUNG HEROES

CHRIS AMON IN SCALE

Chris Amon was the diamond in Ferrari's F1 crown in the late 1960s. With the recent unveiling of a statue in Bulls commemorating the celebrated Kiwi driver, modeller Tony Lyne has created some miniature tributes to our local hero

His path to Formula 1 (F1) was sealed after being scouted by Reg Parnell while driving his Maserati 250F. Reg remarked that only Fangio could drive the 250F better than Chris.

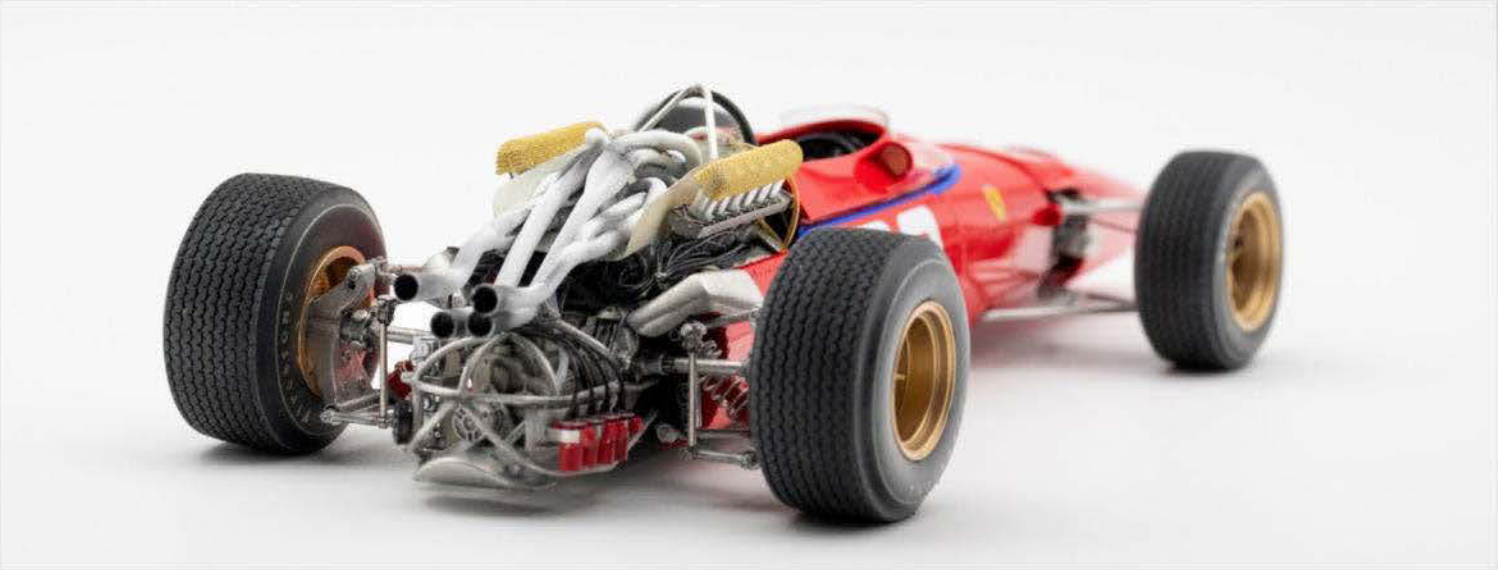
A TALENT FOR ALL FIELDS

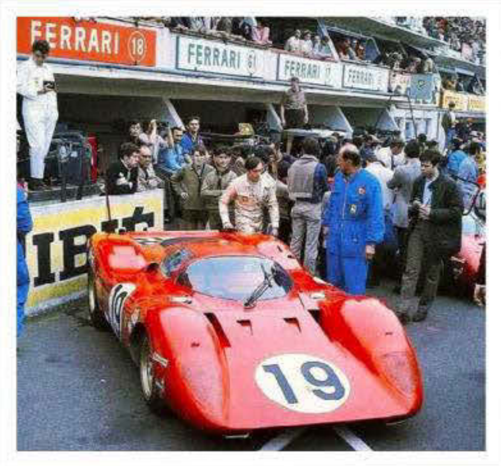
His successful motorsport career spanned F1, Le Mans, Daytona, and the Tasman Series, and looking at the cars he drove, it is apparent that Chris drove through an era of 'beautiful' cars that are prime subjects for being immortalised as scale models.

MAN WITH A MISSION

Unfortunately, Chris Amon's subjects aren't as wide and varied as we would like, but Tony Lyne has made it his mission to obtain and build as many Amon examples as he can get his hands on. Tony's subjects are as wide and varied as the career Chris forged on the world stage.

Tony's largest build is a Ferrari 312P from the 1969 Le Mans event, complete in its striking Ferrari red and wheels that are works of art all on their own. [Tom Holfedder brought the real thing





Chris Amon and his Ferrari 312P that he shared with Peter Schetty at Le Mans 1969 with Ferrari mechanic Antonio Bellentani

to the Southern Classics some years ago. Its shattering speed and sound down Teretonga's main straight was an unforgettable experience – Ed.]

The car this stunning 1:12 scale example is based on unfortunately wasn't as lucky as it was beautiful, as on the first lap of Le Mans, it tangled with John Woolfe's Porsche, which led to a very early retirement for Chris Amon and Peter Schetty.

SMALLER SCALE CAPTIVATES

While the large 1:12 scale provides a massive canvas, Tony's real love comes in at a much smaller 1:43 scale. In this size, we find the Ford No. GT/101 experimental all-aluminium GT40 chassis prepped and campaigned by McLaren Cars.

Chris drove this machine in 1965 in America, and as an endurance racer, it was soon apparent as it struggled against the more nimble, sprint-prepped machines. The silver lining was that this car was being used by Ford for gathering intel for future campaigns.

Unlike the more common plastic kitsets you see on shelves today, Tony's 1:43 examples consist of a metal and resin combo that requires careful prep work and follows the same paint procedure as a real car. The other two 1:43 reproductions of cars driven by Chris are the Matra MS120B and the iconically beautiful Ferrari 166 Dino that Amon raced in the Tasman Series.

AMON'S BEST F1 SEASON WITH FERRARI?

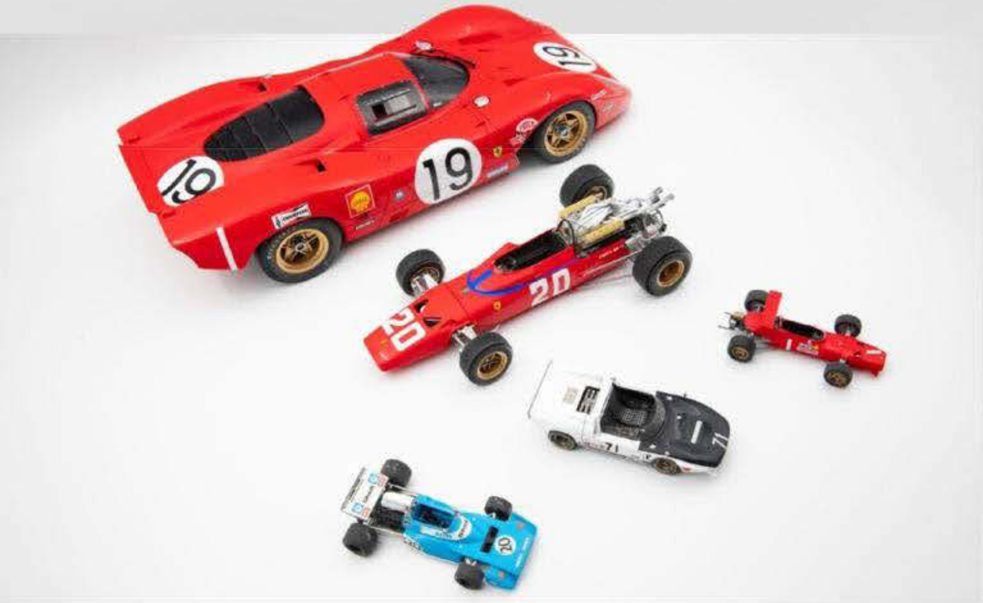
However, one of the most extensive builds in Tony's collection is an all-metal example that is quintessentially Chris Amon. This 1:20 scale example is the 1967 Ferrari 312, F1 machine he drove for the Scuderia.

It was a season marked by the tragic passing of Lorenzo Bandini, but Chris stepped up and showed his raw talent, guiding the 3.0-litre V12 Ferrari to four podium place finishes. He stood atop the podium in this car during his first outing for Ferrari at the prestigious Monaco Grand Prix. In addition, he finished fifth in the driver's standings for the 1967 season.

RUBBING WHEELS WITH THE WORLD'S BEST

While many have dubbed Chris Amon as one of the 'unluckiest drivers' never to win a F1 race, his achievements and success in events such as Le Mans leave no question that he was one of the best. Tony's growing collection is a testament to an illustrious career spent rubbing wheels with the world's best and beating many of them.

When asked about his 'bad luck' in retirement, Chris often remarked, "I was actually one of the lucky ones; so many of my friends from that era have been killed, but I'm still here." ∎



CLASSIC CARS IN THE DIGITAL DOMAIN

Check out *New Zealand Classic Car*'s new website:

classiccar.co.nz

Every week, we upload new content from our 35 years of article archives onto our *New Zealand Classic Car* magazine website. Some uploads of the past few weeks include:

FREE TO READ

Britannia rules the roads: Roadside Relics: 40-plus years of abandoned car-spotting by Gerard Richards went into creating an enormous collection of roadside relics images

https://classiccar.co.nz/roadside-relics/

FREE TO READ

The essence of fun: Just one look at the cute and cheeky lines puts a smile on your face. The beach buggy is as much pure and simple joy as ice cream on a sunny day

https://classiccar.co.nz/the-essence-of-fun/

FREE TO READ

Spicy Italian: Alfa Romeo's elegant 156 achieved a timeless aesthetic appeal, if not great residual values, but the GTA treatment adds a huge slice of extra spice

https://classiccar.co.nz/spicy-italian/

FREE TO READ

Thunder Park Raceway gets the green light: Western Bay of Plenty Council has unanimously approved Thunder Park Raceway!

https://classiccar.co.nz/thunder-park-raceway-get-the-go-ahead/

GOODWOOD REVIVAL 2025

GREAT CLASSICS RACING

By Quinton Taylor, Photography by David Hunter

South Island classic racing enthusiasts David and Suzette Hunter are touring Europe. During their travels, they squeezed in the Goodwood Revival 2025.

"Goodwood, the greatest show on earth for petrol heads!"

The ex-New Zealand, Hec Green built, 1949 RA Vanguard, now owned by Ian Jones in the UK, participated. Thanks for the photos-Ed.

COMING UP IN ISSUE 403

Get set to put your feet up for the holidays with our biggest issue yet!

From our cover car that influenced a country's motor industry to some American Shelby muscle, we have a great range of holiday reading.

There's a bumper surprise inside, previewing the Ayrburn Classic 2026, and you can also pick up a 2026 NZCC Calendar for free with this issue. Don't miss 20-22 February at Aryburn!

We have a very trim and proper Rover SD1 looking like new, which Leyland should have done better with, and we welcome summer in true holiday fashion with convertible tops folded for the sun. Keeping in the sporting theme, you will be amazed at the work that has gone into an early Chevrolet Corvette.

There's a tribute to Crumpy's second Toyota Hi Lux, the yellow one, beautifully restored and wait until you see the workmanship on a Holden ute!

We visit a very rare Japanese sporting saloon that has been sitting in a shed for more than 20 years in pieces, although you wouldn't think so to see it now, and we may have a Japanese 4x4 legend fully restored here on time for Christmas.

We also have two extremes, of large and small racing saloons, and a very special piece of New Zealand motor racing history.

There are all our regular features, including a great story starting with Gerard Richards

See you at the Ayrburn Classic in 2026.

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DIABLO SUPERCAR COLOURFUL TRIO

Lamborghini Diablo

Miranda Easten comes face-to-face with a trio of possibly the most polarising of supercars.

Undeniably evocative and captivatingly stylish, Lamborghini's Diablo set hearts racing.

The fiery successor to the legendary mid-engined Countach supercar from Sant' Agata Bolognese, the Lamborghini Diablo roared onto the scene in 1990. Its dramatic styling was initially envisioned by Marcello Gandini. Chrysler's design team refined it and gave it that unmistakable – and still jaw-dropping – supercar silhouette.

At launch, the Diablo became the fastest production car in the world, reaching 325kph (203mph) with its throaty 5.7-litre V12 pushing out roughly 485 horsepower or 362kW.

In 1993, Lamborghini introduced the Diablo VT, an all-wheel-drive model.

Every corner is a feast for the eyes, like walking through a gallery where each canvas happens to have a V12 heartbeat. I've written about their cars before. The choices, the candy, the sheer temptation … it's borderline criminal.

In disbelief, I recently found myself in the company of not one, not two, but three exceedingly rare Lamborghinis, all of them stunning examples of the iconic Diablo.

As the sun went down, I was left with the sweet memory of one perfect day spent in their fleeting company – proof, if ever you needed it, that Lamborghinis wait for no one.

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LAMBORGHINI DIABLO

Engine	V12 Lamborghini water-cooled, all-alloy, of either 5.7 litre or 6 litre, 48-valve, longitudinally, mid-mounted, rear drive/all-wheel drive (VT models)
Bore X Stroke	87mm x 84mm, 5992cc
Power	575ps (567bhp) at 7100rpm
Torque	630Nm at 5500rpm
Transmission	Five-speed manual transaxle driving rear wheels. Front transfer drive
Fuel system	Fuel injection, individual port injection
Chassis	Spaceframe, aluminium body. Independent suspension coil-over shock absorbers and wishbones/control arms all round
Weight	1625kg (all-wheel-drive models)
Height	1104mm
Length	4460mm
Brakes F/R	330mm vented, discs, 278mm rear, all cross-drilled
Tyres F/R	Pirelli P Zero 235/40ZR-17, 335/35ZR-17
Performance	0–60kph, 2.7 seconds; 0–100 kph, 4.5 seconds; 0–250kph, 23.0 seconds
Top speed	203–210 (340kph) mph, depending on the model
Standing quarter	12.3 seconds
Numbers built	2903 units
Models	1990–1998 six variants (roadster from 1996) Uplift/Facelift – seven variants 1998–2001; Race specials – five from 1995–2000
Original price	US$239K

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